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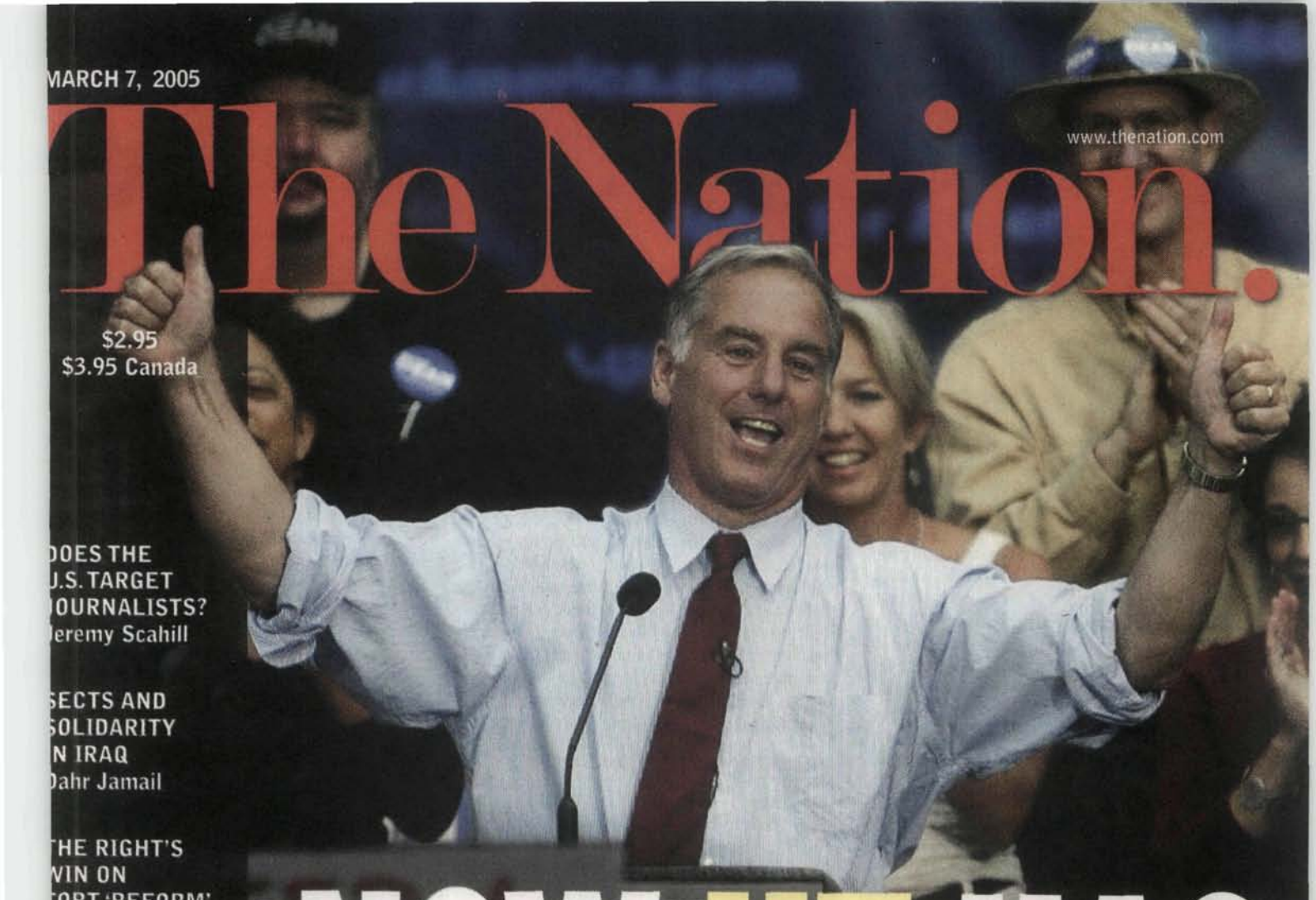

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The Editors

REDS, CARIBBEAN-STYLE
Saz Dreisinger

NOW HE HAS THE POWER

WHAT WILL DEAN DO WITH THE DNC?

by JOHN NICHOLS

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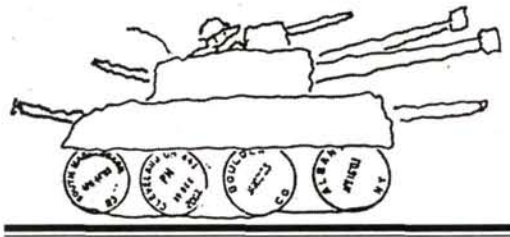

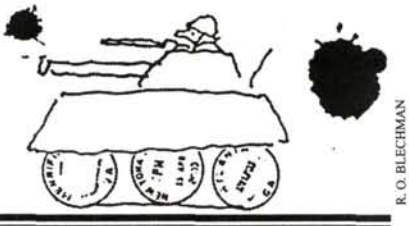

R. O. BLECHMAN

WOMAN, SUMMERS, PINKER, POLLITT...

Cambridge, Mass.

■ According to Katha Pollitt ["Subject to Debate," Feb. 21], the press has responded to Harvard president Lawrence Summers's remarks on gender disparities in science by writing, "Women *are* dumber! Steven Pinker says so!" I've been following the press coverage of this event pretty closely and have seen nothing that attributes to me that mad belief. What I did write, in my book *The Blank Slate* and elsewhere, is that (1) on average, women and men are equal in general intelligence; (2) on average, women are better than men in certain cognitive skills such as verbal fluency, but since these are only averages, it does not mean that all women are better than all men; (3) on average, men are better than women in certain cognitive skills such as mental rotation of 3-D objects, but since these are only averages, it does not mean that all men are better than all women. These conclusions are well established in the literature on gender and cognition, such as the excellent book *Sex Differences in Cognitive Abilities*, by Diane Halpern, the president of the American Psychological Association.

Is it too much to expect even a minimum of accuracy and nuance when it comes to this issue? STEVEN PINKER

POLLITT REPLIES

New York City

■ My characterization of press coverage was clearly humorous and satirical, not a literal summary, in seven words, of the oceans of blather swirling around Summers's bumptious remarks—remarks that Pinker has been frequently quoted as supporting. Obviously, averages do not tell us anything definite about each individual member of the set (although, come to think of it, if women are, on average, superior to men in verbal fluency, shouldn't Harvard's language and literature departments be crammed with tenured women?). Yet general impressions of group capabilities do affect the way individuals are treated and evaluated. That is how stereotypes work. I'm sure the Harvard Medical School interviewer who told my classmate in 1971 that "women can't be doctors" knew that women doctors existed. He was making a judgment about an individual based on his sense of probability—a judgment that was spectacularly wrong, as negative judgments about women's abilities have historically been.

Actually, the more relevant of Pinker's ideas about gender and intelligence is his much-quoted statement that evolution produces "more geniuses, more idiots" in men. In other words, the reason there are fewer women at the highest levels of math and science is not because of social factors like discouragement, discrimination, bias—to the existence of which a mountain of research attests—but because there are fewer women at the highest levels of intelligence. It's not exactly "women *are* dumber!"—it's more like women are more likely to get a B+ and men to get D's or A's. But if you're looking only for A's and believe that most are men, you'll focus your efforts—as teacher, mentor, hiring committee—on them.

Someday we may know whether outstanding ability is distributed in this way. I am disturbed that Pinker apparently believes it explains the current tenure picture at Harvard, an institution that has been hostile to women as equals since its inception. KATHA POLLITT

STATE-ENFORCED CHILDBEARING?

Los Angeles

■ Re Sharon Lerner's "Post-*Roe* Postcard" [Feb. 7]: As a physician, I am terrified by the situation in Mississippi and every other state where legislators are dismantling women's reproductive rights. Even though we live under the supposed protections of *Roe v. Wade*, the reality for women in many parts of our country is that abortion is simply not available. When abortion is not accessible, women's health and lives are in jeopardy.

Roughly 1.3 million women—our mothers, our sisters, our daughters, our friends—undergo an abortion every year in the United States. Despite the stigma and the legal and logistic barriers, a huge number of women still choose to end their unwanted pregnancies for a variety of medical and personal reasons. As our federal government and many states move toward recriminalizing abortion, robbing more women of their right to plan their families, I worry that some of my patients will wind up in desperate straits—pregnant with nowhere safe to turn. This is the very situation that led women, in the days before *Roe* (and before states like New York and California reformed their abortion laws), to risk their lives by undergoing illegal abortions.

Recently, lawmakers in Wyoming introduced legislation that would impose a mandatory twenty-four-hour waiting period and force abortion patients to receive biased counseling. Already enforced in many states, these laws delay the provision of a medical service that women and their doctors have decided they need, usually after lengthy deliberation. Introducing this bill, Wyoming Representative Keith Gingery said, "Personally, I would love it if they decided not to have an abortion."

This one sentence unveils a core strategy of the antichoice movement. These legislators impose their own moral judgments on women they don't even know by insidiously chipping away at the laws that protect the right to abortion. It is the poorest and most vulnerable women who suffer the most from restrictive antiabortion laws, just as in the days before abortion was legalized. Lerner's analysis of the circumstances in Mississippi serves as stark proof that even with the protections of *Roe* still in place, women's reproductive health is slipping dangerously out of the hands of women and their doctors and into the seats of state legislatures. SUSIE BALDWIN, MD, MPH

Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health

We have received questions about how readers might help the last remaining abortion clinic in Mississippi, profiled by Sharon Lerner. The Jackson Women's Health Organization can receive checks directly at 2903 North State Street, Jackson, MS 39216. Of the money received 100 percent will go into a fund to help poor women pay for services. These donations are not tax deductible. Those who wish to make a tax-deductible donation can send checks to the FMF National Clinic Access Project, 1600 Wilson Blvd., Suite 801, Arlington, VA 22209. Half of those donations will go to a special fund created by the Jackson Women's Health Organization to help poor women in Mississippi obtain abortions. The other half will go to the Feminist Majority's National Clinic Access Project's work with federal, state and local law enforcement and community leaders.

—The Editors

SEYMOUR MELMAN

San Francisco

■ In noting Seymour Melman's death ["Passings," Jan. 24], a salient fact should be added. At the height of the cold war in the late 1950s, Melman founded the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), an early grassroots lobby to end the nuclear arms race, leading to the first nuclear test ban treaty in 1963.

I remember Melman as kind, funny, articulate. As an academic during the Vietnam War, he asked who profited from the war system on which the US government spent two-thirds of its annual budget. Military and corporate sectors benefited, he said, but war was now obsolete to defend the nation.

Melman was prescient in observing in the 1960s that chemical and biological warfare techniques created the possibility of a "poor man's atom bomb," undercutting the nuclear monopoly of the materially wealthiest nations.

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EDITORIALS

Mideast Mirage?

Four and a half years after the outbreak of the second intifada, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have signed a cease-fire agreement in Sharm el Sheik, and the peace process appears to be reviving. The question, as ever, is whether the process will bring peace. Considering the fate of the "road map," which disintegrated three months after being unveiled with great ceremony in June 2003, it's hard not to feel a weary sense of déjà vu. In the days following the Sharm el Sheik summit, continued flare-ups on both sides underscored the fragility of the cease-fire.

And yet, the dynamic has changed considerably since 2003. At that time Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon made no secret of his opposition to the road map. It was precisely to silence the growing anti-occupation clamor and kill the road map—to put it "in formaldehyde," as a top adviser recently admitted—that Sharon made the fateful decision to remove all settlers from the Gaza Strip. He needs a cease-fire to avoid the impression that Israel is leaving under fire, as it did in southern Lebanon in 2000.

The Palestinians, for their part, are exhausted after four and a half years of living under siege. Mahmoud Abbas, the newly elected Palestinian Authority president after the death of Arafat, has stated unequivocally that the armed intifada has only damaged the liberation struggle. Though deeply mistrustful of Israeli intentions, Palestinians made clear in the January vote that they are willing to give Abbas's path of negotiation a chance. Abbas is wagering that a cessation of Palestinian violence will compel Israel to re-enter serious negotiations toward a two-state solution to the conflict.

Despite its flamboyant rhetoric, the militant Islamist group Hamas—mauled by Israel's assassination campaign and keenly grasping the shift in mood—has said it will observe the cease-fire. Hamas has an additional reason to lay down arms: This summer the organization will participate in the PA's legislative elections for the first time; widely respected for its charitable work and lack of corruption, Hamas is expected to do well. This would mark a historic transformation, since the organization would be joining the PA power structure and would thus assume responsibility not only for governing but for implementing agreements with Israel.

That's the good news. The bad news is the factors working to undermine the cease-fire. For one, Sharon has insisted that Abbas not merely enforce a cease-fire but also crush Hamas and its militant allies. This would spark a civil war that Abbas has no intention of provoking. The prisoner issue is another potential pitfall. Palestinians are insisting on the release of a significant percentage of the roughly 8,000 now being held, not just a few hundred token releases. Palestinians are also looking for an easing of the checkpoints and closures, which have suffocated economic life.

But the greatest weakness of the Sharm el Sheik agreement is that it fails to address the root of the conflict: the thirty-eight-year occupation. Even if Sharon succeeds in removing Gaza's 8,000 settlers, there will still be some 400,000 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Sharon has made clear he has no intention of relinquishing those lands. Even as Sharon and Abbas were shaking hands in Sharm, Israel was rapidly expanding settlements in Greater Jerusalem and expropriating land elsewhere in the West Bank to extend the separation wall. If these trends continue, frustration will build once again among Palestinians, and Abbas will find it increasingly difficult to convince them that their basic rights can be achieved through negotiation rather than violence.

Constructive US intervention is desperately needed. Reviled in the Arab and Muslim worlds for its support of Israel's occupation, the United States would benefit enormously from brokering a just peace, as George W. Bush will surely be told by foreign leaders during his upcoming European trip. It's an improbable scenario, but without US pressure on Sharon, the cease-fire will go the way of the road map, and resentment toward Washington will grow.

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Shooting the Messenger

One of the most powerful executives in the cable news business, CNN's Eason Jordan, was brought down after he spoke out of school during a panel discussion at the World Economic Forum in January. In a rare moment of candor, Jordan reportedly said that the US military had targeted a dozen journalists who had been killed in Iraq. The comments quickly ignited a firestorm on the Internet, fueled by right-wing bloggers, that led to Jordan's recanting, apologizing and ultimately resigning after twenty-three years at the network, "in an effort to prevent CNN from being unfairly tarnished by the controversy."

But the real controversy here should not be over Jordan's comments. The controversy ought to be over the unconscionable silence in the United States about the military's repeated killing of journalists in Iraq.

Consider the events of April 8, 2003. Early that morning, Al Jazeera correspondent Tareq Ayyoub was reporting from the network's Baghdad bureau. He was providing an eyewitness account of a fierce battle between US and Iraqi forces along the banks of the Tigris. As he stood on the roof of the building, a US warplane swooped in and fired a rocket at Al Jazeera's office. Ayyoub was killed instantly. US Central Command released a statement claiming, "Coalition forces came under significant enemy fire from the building where the Al-Jazeera journalists were working." No evidence was ever produced to bolster this claim. Al Jazeera, which gave the US military its coordinates weeks before the invasion began, says it received assurances a day before Ayyoub's death that the network would not be attacked.

At noon on April 8, a US Abrams tank fired at the Palestine Hotel, home and office to more than 100 unembedded international journalists operating in Baghdad at the time. The shell smashed into the fifteenth-floor Reuters office, killing two cameramen, Reuters's Taras Protsyuk and José Couso of Spain's Telecinco. The United States again claimed that its forces had come under enemy fire and were acting in self-defense. This claim was contradicted by scores of journalists who were in the hotel and by a French TV crew that filmed the attack. In its report on the incident, the Committee to Protect Journalists asserted that "Pentagon officials, as well as commanders on the ground in Baghdad, knew that the Palestine Hotel was full of international journalists."

In a chilling statement at the end of that day in Iraq, then-Pentagon spokesperson Victoria Clarke spelled out the Pentagon's policy on journalists not embedded with US troops. She warned them that Baghdad "is not a safe place. You should not be there."

Eason Jordan's comment was hardly a radical declaration. He was expressing a common view among news organizations around the world. "We have had three deaths, and they were all non-embedded, non-coalition nationals and they were all at the hands of the US military, and the reaction of the US authorities in each case was that they were somehow justified," David Schlesinger, Reuters's global managing editor, said in November. "What is the US's position on nonembeds? Are nonembedded journalists fair game?" One of the BBC's top news anchors, Nik Gowing, said recently that he was "speak[ing] for a large number of news

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organizations, many of whom are not really talking publicly about this at the moment," when he made this statement about the dangers facing reporters in Iraq: "The trouble is that a lot of the military—particularly the American...military—do not want us there. And they make it very uncomfortable for us to work. And I think that this...is leading to security forces in some instances feeling it is legitimate to target us with deadly force and with impunity."

The US military has yet to discipline a single soldier for the killing of a journalist in Iraq. While some incidents are classified as "ongoing investigation[s]," most have been labeled self-defense or mistakes. Some are even classified as "justified," like the killing of Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, shot near Abu Ghraib prison when his camera was allegedly mistaken for a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Also "justified" was the killing of Al Arabiya TV's Mazen al-Tumeizi, blown apart by a US missile as he reported on a burning US armored vehicle on Baghdad's Haifa Street.

There have also been several questionable killings of journalists at US military checkpoints, such as the March 2004 shooting deaths of Ali Abdel-Aziz and Ali al-Khatib of Al Arabiya. The Pentagon said the soldiers who shot the journalists acted within the "rules of engagement." And Reuters freelancer Dhia Najim was killed by US fire while filming resistance fighters in November 2004. "We did kill him," an unnamed military official told the *New York Times*. "He was out with the bad guys. He was there with them, they attacked, and we fired back and hit him."

The military has faced almost no public outcry at home about these killings. In fact, comments by Ann Cooper of the Committee to Protect Journalists have been used to discredit Jordan's statement at Davos. "From our standpoint," Cooper was widely quoted as saying, "journalists are not being targeted by the US military in Iraq." But as CPJ's Joel Campagna acknowledges, the Pentagon has not been cooperative in the investigations of many of these journalist killings. The fact is that CPJ doesn't know that the military has not targeted journalists, and there are many facts that suggest that it has. These include not only the events of April 8, 2003, but credible accounts of journalists

Arthur Miller

When a figure like the playwright Arthur Miller dies, his greatness swells in retrospect in a mound of accumulated tributes and memories; attention is paid to the plays—so deeply American—that are his enduring legacy.

Growing up in the Depression (his father, a wealthy New York garment maker, lost everything in the crash), Miller was exposed to the bitterness of an era of broken dreams, and to the hopes of a time that believed in the possibility of making a better world through common action. He was inspired by the New Deal and the Popular Front culture of the era—the WPA, the Group Theatre (he wrote in *The Nation* that when he graduated from college, "the luckiest fate I could have imagined would have been to have a play of mine produced by the Group Theatre and directed by Harold Clurman"). In his work he wrestled with the claims of social conscience. As he said in a speech accepting the Jerusalem Prize (reprinted in *The Nation*, August 4, 2003), which honored not only his work as a writer but his defense of civil rights and artistic freedom, "as a Jew of a certain generation I was unable to forget the silence of the 1930s and '40s, when Fascism began its destruction of our people, which for so long met with the indifference of the world."

In his plays Miller made no distinction between art and politics. And in his personal life, there was no disconnect between politics and conscience. Such a stance brought him honor: The *New York Times* headlined its obituary "Arthur Miller, Moral Voice of American Stage." But in the 1950s Miller was considered by a majority of Americans the immoral voice of treason. In 1956 the House Un-American Activities Committee ordered him to provide the names of radical friends. At a time when lawyers advised clients to take the Fifth Amendment, which raised less risk of prosecution, Miller honorably took the First, insisting freedom of speech made his political opinions and associations none of the government's business. He was cited for contempt (later overturned) and his passport was lifted.

In 1954 Miller wrote a satire of the times for *The Nation*, called "A Modest Proposal for Pacifying the Public Temper" (July 3, 1954). It was a dryly witty exercise in Swiftian irony, no doubt lost on Congressional inquisitors, in which he proposed that all citizens be incarcerated at age 18 until they had appeared before a "Court of Clearance" and proved their "Absolute and steady Allegiance to this Country."

Miller's occasional contributions to *The Nation* ranged from editorials to vivid interviews with Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro, doors his eminence opened to him and to our readers. One of his most memorable pieces was "Dinner With the Ambassador" (May 18, 1985), an account of a trip he and fellow dramatist Harold Pinter made to Turkey for International PEN to show solidarity with imprisoned writers. After speaking with wives and friends of jailed writers, Pinter and Miller attended a dinner at the American Ambassador's, a far-right former international law professor who supported the repressive military government. Responding to his host's toast, Miller deplored the absence of human rights in Turkey and closed: "The American part here ought to be the holding up of democratic norms, if only as a goal, instead of justifying their destruction as the only defense against chaos." That was Miller—a reasoned voice of conscience in the chambers of realpolitik.

We shall deeply miss that voice here and in our theater. As Tony Kushner commented, "There was a simplicity, a humbleness, and decency in his work." And in the man. He had an innate egalitarianism, a plain-spoken American way of talking, a directness, a lack of airs—a plumb-line moral compass. Commenting on the public opposition to the Clinton impeachment trial in 1999, he was encouraged: "Outrage is in again. We haven't had outrage in so long one almost forgot it could exist anymore." In a time of "necessary lies," when we have an Attorney General who rationalized torture, we will miss Miller's voice exhorting us to be engaged citizens—to "tear at our collars and get red in the face" again.

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COMMENT

being tortured by the US military in Iraq, such as Salah Hassan and Suheib Badr Darwish of Al Jazeera [see Christian Parenti, "Al Jazeera Goes to Jail," March 29, 2004] and three Reuters staffers who say they were brutalized by US forces for seventy-two hours after they filmed a crashed US helicopter near Falluja in January 2004. According to news reports, the journalists were blindfolded, forced to stand for hours with their arms raised and threatened with sexual abuse. A family member of one journalist said US interrogators stripped him naked and forced a shoe into his mouth.

In many of these cases, there is a common thread: The journalists, mostly Arabs, were reporting on places or incidents that the military may not have wanted the world to see—military vehicles in flames, helicopters shot down, fierce resistance against the "liberation" forces, civilian deaths.

In his resignation letter, Jordan wrote, "I never meant to imply U.S. forces acted with ill intent when U.S. forces accidentally killed journalists." The families and colleagues of the slain journalists believe otherwise. And it is up to all journalists, not just those in Europe and the Middle East, to honor the victims by holding their killers responsible. In Spain, the family of cameraman José Couso has filed a lawsuit against the US soldiers who killed him, and they plan to travel to the United States for the anniversary of his death this spring. Will any network have the courage to put them on the air? JEREMY SCAHILL

Jeremy Scahill, who has reported extensively from Iraq, is a journalist with the radio and TV program Democracy Now! *(democracynow.org).*

The Lynne Stewart Trial

TAKING LIBERTIES

On February 10, a jury in New York City convicted longtime activist attorney Lynne Stewart and two others on all counts in one of the Bush Administration's most heralded terrorism trials since 9/11. Stewart, a 65-year-old who has never committed a violent act, now faces twenty to thirty years in prison. Do you feel safer?

Perhaps more than any other, this case illustrates how out of hand things have gotten in the "war on terrorism." To inflate its successes in ferreting out terrorism, the Justice Department turned an administrative infraction into a terrorism conviction that, unless reversed, will likely send Stewart to prison for the rest of her life. To make sure the charges would stick, the prosecution tried the case in the most inflammatory and prejudicial way possible, introducing as "background" reams of evidence of terrorism that had nothing to do with Stewart's actions.

The case against Stewart was fairly straightforward. She represented Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, now serving multiple life sentences for conspiring to blow up several Manhattan bridges and tunnels. Rahman is barred from any contact with the outside world beyond his immediate family and attorneys. As his lawyer, Stewart signed an agreement not to transmit messages from him to unauthorized people. In June 2000 she violated that agreement. After meeting with the sheik, Stewart called Reuters to say that he had withdrawn his personal support for a cease-fire then in place in Egypt. Two days later she issued a clarification explaining that the sheik "did not cancel the cease-fire," but "left the matter to my brothers to examine it and study it because they are the ones who live there and they know the circumstances better than I."

Stewart should not have issued the release. Doing so violated the administrative agreement. But it is not a crime to violate such an agreement. In an ordinary case, the lawyer might receive a warning. In an unusual case, the lawyer might be barred from continuing to visit her client (as indeed Stewart was at the time, until she agreed to a new set of conditions). In an extraordinary case, the lawyer might be brought up on disciplinary charges before the bar.

But after September 11, the Justice Department was not content with any of those measures; it charged Stewart with terrorism. Since violating the agreement was not itself a crime, the indictment charged her with fraudulently entering into the agreement in the first place. And it alleged that by passing on the sheik's message, she'd offered "material support" in aid of terrorist activity.

Both charges were a stretch. Showing that Stewart violated the agreement would be easy, but proving that she intended to violate it when she initially signed it was much more challenging. And the terrorism charge would require showing that Stewart's statement to the press was intended to support a particular terrorist act, when in fact the release did not call for or prompt any such act.

So how did the prosecution meet its burden? With classic McCarthy-era tactics: fearmongering and guilt by association. First, it tried Stewart together with Ahmed Sattar, an Egyptian-born US citizen against whom it had thousands of hours of wiretaps of communications with a terrorist group. Among other things, Sattar had issued a fake *fatwa* urging followers to "kill [Jews] wherever they are." By trying Stewart and Sattar together, the government could taint Stewart with Sattar's sins, even though, as was the case with the *fatwa*, she had nothing to do with them and no knowledge of them. In his closing, the prosecutor repeated Sattar's "kill the Jews" *fatwa* more than seventy times.

Second, the prosecution sought to inflame the jury by introducing evidence that had nothing to do with Stewart's actions. Shortly before the anniversary of 9/11, it played a tape of Osama bin Laden expressing support for the sheik. It introduced evidence of Al Qaeda's bombing of the USS Cole, even though there was no claim that Stewart or her co-defendants had anything to do with Al Qaeda, and of a massacre in Egypt in which fifty-eight tourists were killed, even though the massacre long pre-dated the actions of Stewart and her co-defendants. The prosecution offered this evidence as "background," not proof of Stewart's culpability, but it is hard to believe that such a distinction could be maintained by a jury sitting less than a mile from Ground Zero.

Let me be clear: I think Stewart crossed the line from zealous advocacy to wrongful conduct. But she is no terrorist. At most she deserves a disciplinary proceeding before the bar. Sending her to prison will provide another statistic in the Justice Department's desperate effort to show results in the "war on terrorism," but it will not make us any safer. One of the defining evils of terrorism is that it uses human beings' lives to send a political message. Has the Justice Department done any differently here? DAVID COLE

David Cole is the author of Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism *(New Press).*

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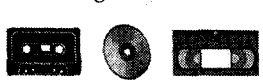

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COMMENT

Tort 'Reform' Triumphs

Nothing could better illustrate the pending extinction of civil action as a tool for fighting corporate criminality than a measure that will effectively do away with many types of class-action lawsuits. With passage all but assured in the House following a lopsided 72-to-26 vote in the Senate on February 10, the Class Action Fairness Act was expected to be quickly signed by George W. Bush, who campaigned for it ardently. The bill is the first significant Congressional tort "reform" victory for the radical right and a catastrophe for workers and consumers. The GOP is hoping the almost total collapse of the Democrats on the Senate bill—eight Democrats co-sponsored it—means improved chances of passing a bill curbing asbestos suits and a reworked medical malpractice measure that caps damages for pain and suffering and drastically limits suits over dangerous drugs like Vioxx.

Not satisfied with nibbling away at the welfare state, already the thinnest in the industrialized West, conservatives have spent more than twenty years demonizing lawyers and ridiculing victims in order to eliminate a uniquely American right, rooted in the Seventh Amendment, that allows juries to assess damages in civil courts for corporate misbehavior. In Europe and Japan, governments compensate victims; in this country, it is often done, haphazardly, by entrepreneur-lawyers. The same lawyers are more successful in another, quite accidental way: regulating and punishing companies that pollute, maim or cheat—a critical function at a time when government does less and less to force them to act responsibly. Fifteen state attorneys general recognized this when they called on the Senate to dump or amend the class-action bill.

The bill, like the other anticipated tort "reforms," was produced by the same right-wing think tanks that gave us the proposed Social Security overhaul and Medicare privatization and was marketed by the US Chamber of Commerce, which along with a coalition of businesses has spent tens of millions of dollars on the effort. Much of that money has gone to support like-minded elected officials. In the 2004 election, for example, the Chamber helped spend millions in seven battleground states to pay for ads urging voters to support lawsuit restrictions endorsed by Bush and opposed by John Kerry [see Zegart, "The Right Wing's Drive for 'Tort Reform,'" October 25, 2004]. Such efforts are part of a strategy embraced by Bush guru Karl Rove to drain cash from tort lawyers, who overwhelmingly support Democrats.

The class-action bill is premised on the need to end supposedly rampant litigation abuses in state courts, where, it is claimed, plaintiff-friendly juries and corrupt judges team up to award damage "jackpots" that drive up consumer prices. But numerous studies have shown no spike in tort filings, including class actions; reports by the American Tort Reform Association, tort reform's flagship group, could find data for only two judicial jurisdictions out of 3,141 nationwide where abuses allegedly take place.

On its face, the class-action bill is mere procedural tinkering, transferring from state to federal court actions involving more than $5 million where any plaintiff is from a different state from the defendant company. But federal courts are much more hostile to class actions than their state counterparts; such cases tend to be rooted in the finer points of state law, in which federal judges are reluctant to dabble. And even if federal judges do take on these suits, with only 678 of them on the bench (compared with 9,200 state judges), already overburdened dockets will grow. Thus, the bill will make class actions—most of which involve discrimination, consumer fraud and wage-and-hour violations—all but impossible. One example: After forty lawsuits were filed against Wal-Mart for allegedly forcing employees to work "off the clock," four state courts certified these suits as class actions. Not a single federal court did so, although the practice probably involves hundreds of thousands of employees nationwide.

In one such case in Washington State, attorney Toby Marshall is representing 40,000 workers, each of whom stands to gain, on average, a couple of hundred dollars in unpaid wages. While this may be a significant sum for people making just over minimum wage, it's far too little to merit a lawyer's filing an individual claim, especially given the cost of suing the nation's largest retailer, which Marshall estimated at several hundred thousand dollars. That would mean Wal-Mart would never have to pay Georgie Hartwig for the meal and rest breaks she says she wasn't allowed

CALVIN TRILLIN

CONDOLEEZZA RICE

(Sung to the tune of "March of the Siamese Children," from The King and I, *and accompanied by the Secretary herself on the baby grand.)*

Condoleezza Rice, who is cold as ice, is precise
with her advice. Yes, she is quite precise, and,
yes, she's cold as ice.
In her can be found talents that abound. She's
renowned, though tightly wound. Yes, talents can
be found, and, yes, she's tightly wound.

She once avowed we might see a large mushroom
cloud if more reign by Hussein were allowed.
Which turned out to be: total bushwa, yes, total
bushwa.
When she accused him of buying tubes only used
to make nukes, the truth was abused.
And she knew she spoke: total bushwa, yes, total
bushwa.

So to serve her guy, she will testify to a lie she
hopes you'll buy—to try to petrify, precisely tell
a lie.
Condoleezza Rice, who is cold as ice, is precise
with her advice. Yes, she is quite precise, and,
yes, she's cold as ice.

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to take over the seven years she worked for the chain. Hartwig said that if she protested, she was told, "You're on Wal-Mart time."

The right's success with the class-action bill is the story of how a group of legal extremists crafted a message, brought almost every Fortune 500 corporation on board and then pumped money into organizing and seeding the culture with that message. If progressives don't match their tenacity, one of the last effective levers for social and economic justice will cease to function. At that point, people like Georgie Hartwig—or, potentially, any one of us—will be on Wal-Mart time for good. DAN ZEGART

Dan Zegart is the author of Civil Warriors: The Legal Siege on the Tobacco Industry, *and* Your Father's Voice: Letters for Emmy About Life with Jeremy—and Without Him After 9/11.

Beyond Boycotts

Absent George W. Bush's undergoing a conversion like St. Paul's on the road to Damascus, there probably won't be much good environmental news out of Washington in Bush's second term. Environmentalists will fight to limit further mischief, but these will be holding actions. Actual progress against climate change, deforestation and other unfolding disasters will not come from inside-the-Beltway policy battles.

Victories have been scored on another front, however: by campaigns that target specific corporations for environmentally destructive behavior. Since Bush's victory in November, two of America's best-known brands—Ford and Victoria's Secret—have been badly stung by such campaigns, and more are planned. Such campaigns are not silver bullets, activists concede, but they offer more hope than banging on the locked doors of Washington, especially under the current right-wing reign.

Anticorporate activism is, of course, hardly new in the United States: Farm workers urged consumers to boycott nonunion grapes in the 1970s, antisweatshop activists blackened Nike's name in the 1990s. And it's worth noting that most big Washington-based environmental groups continue to shun the strategy, perhaps in deference to their corporate funding and board members. The Ford and Victoria's Secret campaigns were instead organized by coalitions of national grassroots groups based in the more radical San Francisco Bay Area. The campaigns confront corporate polluters rather than just their political overseers and hit them where it hurts most: in their revenues and reputations, which in today's brand-conscious world are increasingly linked.

"We view corporate campaigns as an end run around political systems, where government action hasn't kept pace with the destructive effects of corporate behavior," says Jennifer Krill, a campaigner at the Rainforest Action Network, a leading group in the Ford campaign. Noting that federal policy battles over auto fuel efficiency have dragged on for twenty years with no real progress, Krill adds that RAN decided to target Ford because rainforests are threatened both by the global warming Ford's vehicles cause and by the oil drilling needed to fill gas tanks. Niel Golightly, the director of sustainable business strategies at Ford, respects the activists' pressure tactics. "We deal with them not only because they have a stick to whack us with but because they represent a large and legitimate part of public opinion that expects better environmental performance from Ford and other automakers," he says.

Unlike some past anticorporate campaigns, today's use both the carrot and the stick. The activists' goal is not simply to get a corporation to clean up its own act but to use that corporation to push an entire market sector in a green direction. "I call our strategy 'beyond boycotts,'" says Lafcadio Cortesi, a campaigner with Forest Ethics, which spearheaded the Victoria's Secret campaign. "Instead of just saying 'Don't clearcut,' we're trying to harness market forces to get corporations to do the right thing."

Activists have been particularly successful regarding the wood and paper industry; the campaign against Home Depot, the world's largest lumber retailer, is the model. Beginning in 1997, activists mounted a public shaming campaign against Home Depot—picketing stores, hanging banners on the company's headquarters, protesting at shareholder meetings. Home Depot executives eventually decided that going green was preferable to losing environmentally minded customers. In 1999, Home Depot pledged to phase out the sale of old-growth wood, and its market power led other retailers, including Kinko's, to do the same. Activists then worked with Home Depot to deploy its market power "upstream," against the logging companies that supply wood. The results so far include agreements that protect 3.5 million acres of Canada's Great Bear Forest and a million acres of Chile's native forests.

A separate campaign has led Staples and Office Depot to compete to be the greenest company in the office supply industry. Both retailers now aggressively market recycled paper and sell much more of it. Tyler Elm, the director of environmental affairs at Office Depot, insists these changes are permanent. "Given their business model," he says of the activist groups, "I can't say they won't be back. So we have adopted an environmental brand that is responsible, transparent and accountable."

The campaigns against Victoria's Secret and Ford follow the same script. First, public shaming via full-page ads in the *New York Times*. The Victoria's Secret ad, which featured a lingerie-clad model hoisting a chain saw, accused the company of using endangered Canadian forests for the catalogues it mails to US households (at the astounding rate of more than 1 million a day). The ad sparked news stories by *USA Today*, the *Today* show and others. Ford was hit by a series of ads that mocked CEO William Ford Jr.'s claim to be a "lifelong environmentalist." The ads reminded Ford that his company has lobbied against stronger fuel-efficiency laws and "ranked dead last among all major automakers in overall fuel efficiency every year since you became CEO." The ads coincided with nationwide demonstrations at Victoria's Secret shops and Ford dealerships. The demonstrations not only showed there was real grassroots muscle behind the ads; they attracted still more news coverage that further spread the protesters' message.

To what end? Ford executives met with activists in San Francisco in January, but neither side reported much progress. "We know comprehensive change doesn't come overnight," says Krill of RAN. "Home Depot is still implementing commitments it made to us in 1999." Anthony Hebron, a spokesman for Victoria's Secret's parent company, Limited Brands, says the campaigners have no effect on his company. "We were going to increase our

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COMMENT

recycled content anyway...and we're committed to doing more."

Cortesi of Forest Ethics promises that activists will keep the heat on Victoria's Secret. But a broader question remains: Can corporate campaigns deliver more than incremental change? Given a global economic system that demands ever more production and consumption, can reforming a few companies make a difference? "No one can change the whole system," says Paul Hawken, an author and business theorist who set up the meeting between activists and Ford after a conversation with Bill Ford Jr. "The most effective thing anyone can do is to affect the part of the system they can and have faith they're not acting alone. One by one, issues are being addressed and something cumulative is happening, even if it doesn't show yet." MARK HERTSGAARD

Mark Hertsgaard, The Nation*'s environment correspondent and a fellow of The Nation Institute, is the author, most recently, of* Earth Odyssey: Around the World in Search of Our Environmental Future *and* The Eagle's Shadow: Why America Fascinates and Infuriates the World.

Free-Speech Fights

Rummaging through Yale University's library shelves in early 2001 to prepare a talk on news media and genocide, I came across a study of nineteenth-century Colorado newspapers by Ward Churchill. His research steered me to a chilling 1891 editorial in the *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer* by L. Frank Baum, future author of *The Wizard of Oz*, calling for "the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians."

In the small fields of Native American history and genocide studies, Churchill is a figure respected enough to have contributed to the authoritative *Encyclopedia of Genocide* and divisive enough that fellow scholars debate his conclusions. It is no discredit to Churchill's scholarship to say that his broader political writing—including the now notorious 9/11 essay that became *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens*—is uniformly hackneyed and filled with adolescent delight in provocation for its own sake (like his grotesque moral hairsplitting in hinting that a stockbroker is a more legitimate target for Al Qaeda than a janitor).

The truth is, though, that neither Churchill's historical studies nor his sectarian harangues have much to do with why his name now roils two college campuses 1,700 miles apart. What happened reveals a basic dynamic behind campus free-speech fights. Churchill, who teaches at the University of Colorado, was invited to speak on Native American issues at Hamilton College in upstate New York. His host was Hamilton's Kirkland Project for the Study of Gender, Society and Culture, which last fall had invited Susan Rosenberg, the Weather Underground conspirator pardoned by Bill Clinton, to teach a one-month writing course, until protest threats by police led her to withdraw. Primed by the Rosenberg spat, a Hamilton political scientist critical of Kirkland's penchant for in-your-face guests Googled the spring speaker list. Up came Churchill's noxious "little Eichmanns" quote.

The Hamilton student newspaper broke the story on January 21. At the urging of college president Joan Hinde Stewart, Kirkland's director, Nancy Rabinowitz, changed Churchill's forum to a panel on the limits of dissent. Stewart said she would defend Churchill's right to speak but promised to "review" the Kirkland Project itself. On January 26 the story made the *Syracuse Post-Standard* and by mid-morning was blasted across the conservative website littlegreenfootballs.com—soon followed by a reader's suggestion that Churchill get "a fire ax to the back of the skull." By January 28 it was on the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page; that night, *The O'Reilly Factor* ran with it, featuring a justifiably distressed Hamilton student whose father had died at the World Trade Center. The host called on viewers to e-mail the college and on alumni to withhold contributions. Over the next week Bill O'Reilly devoted daily segments to Hamilton College and Churchill. Factual accuracy went out the window. On February 1, O'Reilly guest David Horowitz painted Hamilton as a repressively left-wing institution, declaring, "The students there can only identify one conservative on the faculty." Students, he told O'Reilly, had twice invited him to speak at Hamilton. "It's not like the faculty brought me up there." In fact, according to Horowitz's own blog, he visited Hamilton in 2002 at the invitation of historian Maurice Isserman; "Hamilton College scores better than your average school in terms of diversity of faculty views," Horowitz wrote at the time. By February 5, after a raft of threats to the college and to Churchill himself, Stewart canceled Churchill's talk. The University of Colorado, pressured by Governor Bill Owens, secured Churchill's resignation as chair of its ethnic studies program.

In just a few days, a parochial argument at a small college turned into a national banquet for right-wingers hungry for post-Kerry culture enemies. Hamilton College stepped into a well-funded national campaign to rein in outspoken faculty: "professors who hate America," as Horowitz and Daniel Pipes call distinguished scholars like historians Eric Foner of Columbia and Glenda Gilmore of Yale because they criticize the Iraq War. Invective flies out on the unprecedented hysteria transmission-belt of Internet and right-wing broadcasters. Throw a professor's antiwar speech into the hopper and within hours you have menace to donations, tub-thumping by politicians and a stream of what Gilmore experienced last year: "death threats and rape wishes."

What's worrisome is not that these professors will back down but that the universities will—like Hamilton—become fearful of granting a platform to controversial speakers. O'Reilly & Co. smelled red meat because of Hamilton's obvious uncertainty: The school's willingness to yield in the face of attack (let's review the program and change the topic) told them to keep pushing.

Is Ward Churchill persecuted when reasonable people—like that still-grieving Hamilton student—take offense at his self-marginalizing writing? No. But what happened at Hamilton is that a campus debate over a provocative speaker was hijacked and exploited. Now at the University of Colorado, this tenured faculty member's writings are being subjected to a line-by-line review for evidence of academic malfeasance solely as a punishment for his political statements. Thanks to O'Reilly and his cohorts, Churchill gained unearned fame. But what is happening in Boulder should frighten all scholars regardless of politics. BRUCE SHAPIRO

Bruce Shapiro's most recent book is Shaking the Foundations: 200 Years of Investigative Journalism in America *(Nation Books).*

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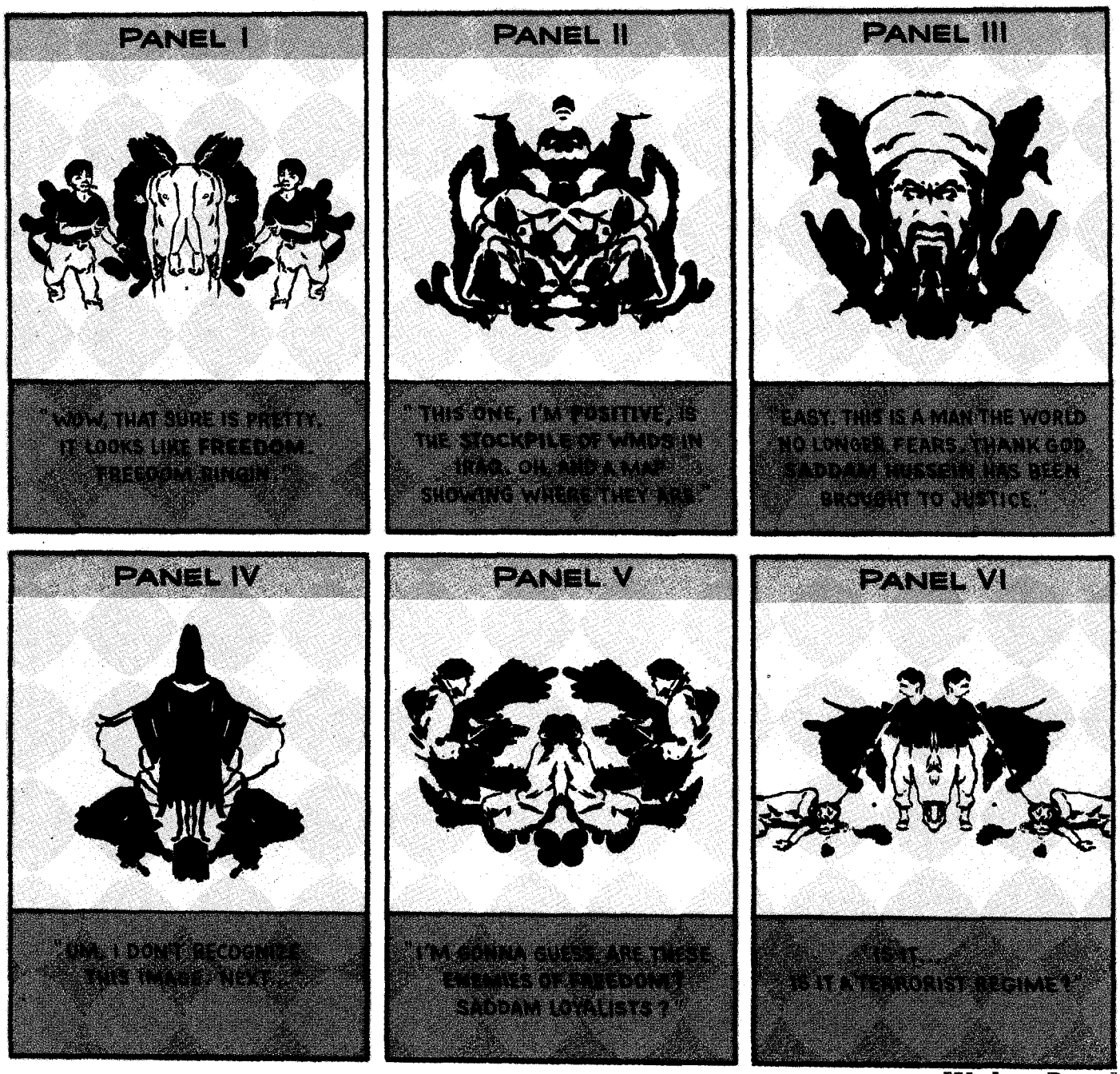
COMIX NATION

AS PART OF THIS YEAR'S PRESIDENTIAL HEALTH EXAMINATION, A RORSCHACH INKBLOT TEST WAS ADMINISTERED TO CHECK THE GENERAL MENTAL CAPABILITIES, ARTICULATION, AND PERSONALITY OF GEORGE W. BUSH. LET'S EXAMINE THE RESULTS.


PANEL I
"WOW, THAT SURE IS PRETTY. IT LOOKS LIKE FREEDOM. FREEDOM RINGIN'."
PANEL II
"THIS ONE, I'M POSITIVE, IS THE STOCKPILE OF WMDS IN IRAQ. OH, AND A MAP SHOWING WHERE THEY ARE."
PANEL III
"EASY. THIS IS A MAN THE WORLD NO LONGER FEARS. THANK GOD SADDAM HUSSEIN HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO JUSTICE."
PANEL IV
"UM, I DON'T RECOGNIZE THIS INKBLOT. NEXT..."
PANEL V
"I'M GONNA GUESS ARE THESE ENEMIES OF FREEDOM? SADDAM LOYALISTS?"
PANEL VI
"IS IT... IS IT A TERRORIST REGIME?"

Mickey Duzyj

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Back to Salem

Off goes former Father Paul Shanley to state prison in Massachusetts for twelve to fifteen years, convicted of digitally raping and otherwise sexually abusing Paul Busa two decades ago. Shanley's now 74; the earliest he can hope for parole is when he's 82, at which point the DA could determine that he is still, though frail, "a sexually dangerous person" and should be confined for whatever years remain. A DA in Massachusetts exercised just that option in the case of another ex-priest, James Porter, who was released last year after pleading guilty in 1993 to molesting twenty-eight children. At the time of his death in February at the age of 70, Porter was in civil confinement, with the state seeking to keep him behind bars indefinitely.

So Shanley must know that most likely he will never see the light of day, unless through a barred window. He has more pressing concerns, namely the distinct possibility that he will be murdered in prison. "I want him to die in prison, whether it's of natural causes or otherwise. However he dies, I hope it's slow and painful," declared Shanley's accuser, Paul Busa, a 27-year-old firefighter, in a written statement read in court.

The menacing words "or otherwise" were no doubt intended to evoke the fate of John Geoghan, a priest sent to a Massachusetts prison in 2002 for fondling a 10-year-old. Although Geoghan was being kept in "protective custody," he was strangled to death by a man serving a life term for killing a gay man. There have been allegations that prison guards were complicit in his murder. Paul Busa's father, Richard, is a corrections officer, and other relatives, including Paul's wife, are in Massachusetts law enforcement.

In his written statement Busa said that Shanley "is a founding member of NAMBLA and openly advocated sex between men and little boys." It's this supposed distinction, as the man who created the North American Man Boy Love Association, that has earned Shanley his throne in the Ninth Circle of the damned. It was one of the credentials in his résumé as presented in a two-and-a-half-hour PowerPoint presentation to the press in April 2002 by Roderick MacLeish Jr., the personal-injury lawyer representing Busa. At that presentation MacLeish released Shanley's ample diocesan file to the media, which hurriedly repeated MacLeish's allegations without pausing to scrutinize the file.

Had they done so, they would have found nothing to buttress the claims that Shanley founded NAMBLA, or was ever a member, or had ever advocated sex between men and little boys, or had a thirty-year record of child abuse complaints made against him or a history of being moved from parish to parish. Yet all these allegations have become the common currency of Shanley's biography, and if guards usher a murderer into his cell, the killer will probably have the NAMBLA charge at the top of his mind. Shanley's defense counsel, Frank Mondano, has said that during jury selection every potential juror was aware of the Shanley scandal, and what they most commonly "knew" was that Shanley was somehow involved with NAMBLA.

When my colleague JoAnn Wypijewski began to report on the Shanley case in 2002, the first thing she did was read the 1,600-page diocesan file that MacLeish had brandished. It became clear to JoAnn that in a case that had consumed the press, most conspicuously the *Boston Globe*, which ran almost daily stories on the priest scandal for years, she seems to have been the only reporter to have taken the trouble to look at the church dossier.

What she found in the documents were many pages of Shanley's fervent defense of homosexuality as a normal human variation and the uproar these arguments provoked in the church. (Shanley, like many in his generation, found support for his assertions in Alfred Kinsey's 1950s sex surveys.) In terms of sexual abuse, the church file has one complaint from the 1960s, which Shanley denied and his superior, rightly or wrongly, determined to be baseless; then nothing until the early 1990s, when a few accusers imputed various abuses to the priest dating back to the 1960s or '70s. But nowhere was there any support for the claim that Shanley was a founder of NAMBLA or had attended a NAMBLA meeting; JoAnn, despite many discoveries about Shanley's active sex life as a priest, found no external evidence to back the charge. For her fascinating report on Shanley, see the September/October 2004 issue of *Legal Affairs* and www.counterpunch.org/jw01292005.html.

What landed Shanley in prison was not anything in the church's file but the uncorroborated "recovered memories" of one man, Paul Busa. This case is a throwback to the early 1990s and before, when people were put behind bars for lifetimes on the basis of memories elicited by leading questions of psychotherapists. Ultimately, after years of patient effort by a few journalists, psychoanalysts, psychological researchers and advocates for justice, "recovered memory" as a tool of the latter-day Inquisition fell into well-deserved disrepute. In the state that gave us Salem in the seventeenth century and the Amiraults in the twentieth, Shanley's case has reintroduced recovered memory to the courtrooms of the twenty-first.

In Shanley's trial, prosecution witnesses would not confirm Busa's claim that he was regularly taken from religious-instruction classes by Shanley. Nor would they confirm that they had ever seen the priest alone with Busa, or had seen anything untoward in the years 1983–89, during which Busa claims abuse. These claims were based on memories that became active in 2002, following Busa's conversation with his girlfriend about the nearly identical recovered memories of his friend Gregory Ford. Ford was dropped by the prosecution in the same case, as were two others, their stories apparently deemed by the DA too vexed for courtroom use.

No facts relative to the charges intruded into the courtroom; only emotion. Superior Court Judge Stephen Neel should have dismissed the charges, as requested by the defense. In the atmosphere of Massachusetts it would have taken courage to do that, and truly extraordinary courage for anyone on the jury (which included a therapist) to have insisted that memories are not evidence, and that there was far more than reasonable doubt in this case. ■

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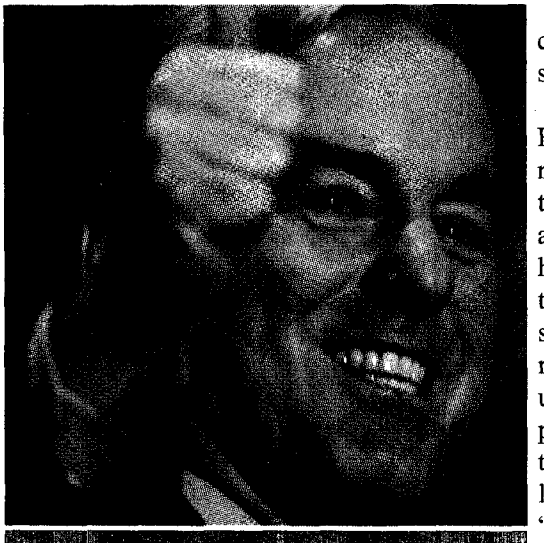
ARTICLES

NOW HE HAS THE POWER



by JOHN NICHOLS

With the selection of Howard Dean as its chairman, the 213-year-old Democratic Party has become something it has not been for a long time: exciting. A measure of that came three days before the 447 members of the Democratic National Committee chose him, at a pre-victory party Dean held in a microbrewery just blocks from DNC headquarters. Hundreds of his mostly young, mostly liberal supporters packed the place to hear Dean declare the Democrats to be the "party of the future." They also got a signal that he remained "their man," not the neutered version of himself that party insiders were still hoping he might become in his new role. When a backer bellowed the updated Harry Truman slogan that became a mantra for Dean's presidential campaign—"Give 'em hell, Howard!"—a wicked grin rippled across Dean's face. "I'm trying to be restrained in my new role," he chirped. "I may be looking for a three-piece suit." Then he burst into laughter and exclaimed, "Fat chance!"

The crowd cheered. Reporters flipped open notebooks. A faint shudder was heard from the offices of Congressional Democratic leaders. And Republicans, recalling the Iowa caucus incident that so damaged Dean's presidential prospects, repeated their tired take on the Vermonter's political resurrection: "It's a scream."

But unlike past DNC chairs, Dean won't have to scream for attention. Taking over as chairman of a party that is locked out of the White House and unable to muster anything more than a "minority leader" to flex its legislative muscle, Dean has positioned himself as the most camera-ready Democrat in the country. As such, he is in a position to make his party—as opposed to an individual candidate or faction—more newsworthy and potentially more dangerous than it has been in decades. What remains to be seen, however, is whether Dean's tenure will prove merely a wild ride or a ride into the flourishing future the new chair promises: with huge gains in the 2006 elections and a Democratic President marching down Pennsylvania Avenue on January 20, 2009.

Dean has become the Democratic Party's Rorschach test. Frustrated grassroots activists and donors see him as the tribune of their antiwar, anticorporate and anti-Bush views. Big thinkers see him as an idea filter who understands the potential of neglected issues and strategies. State and local party officials recognize him as a former governor who understands that Democrats can compete in all fifty states and is more likely to listen to them than Congressional leaders who remain obsessed with "targeted" states and races. Mississippi Congressman Bennie Thompson sums up the pro-Dean sentiment when he says Dean will "bring new spirit and new energy to the party, the likes of which we haven't seen in a long time." But his enthusiasm is not echoed by the Democratic insiders in DC who have gotten so used to playing politics by GOP rules that they see Dean as a "madman" on a suicide mission that will wreck everything they know. *New Republic* commentator Jonathan Chait put their fears into words when he grumbled that "Dean, with his intense secularism, arrogant style, throngs of high-profile counterculture supporters and association with the peace movement, is the precise opposite of the image Democrats want to send out."

The fact that Dean inspires such diverse passions among Democrats says as much about the party's current troubles as it does about him. The truth is that his is a fairly conventional story of political progress. He was a successful, if not particularly progressive, Vermont governor who—in the tradition of small-state governors making big splashes in national Democratic politics—mounted an innovative run for the presidential nomination that inspired bedraggled party cadres. That campaign was doomed not by Dean's antiwar rhetoric or advocacy of domestic reforms but by his bumbling transition from insurgent to frontrunner. Were it not for another candidate's bumbling, that might have been the end of

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his story. "If Kerry had won, he would have picked the chairman and it wouldn't have been Howard," says Mike Tate, a former DNC member who worked for Dean's presidential campaign. "What happened in November opened up a debate about the party's future that Dean could be a part of. In fact, he'll be leading it."

Historically, the DNC has rubber-stamped as chairman the choice of whatever establishment figure was calling the shots—a President, former President, Congressional leader or big contributor. But with Kerry defeated, Bill Clinton retired and Democratic Congressional leaders struggling to remain afloat in the GOP tide, the way was clear for something Democrats hadn't seen in years: a genuine contest. The competition suited Dean and the activists, but it horrified Beltway Democrats. Much of the griping about Dean by the party's Washington elites and their amen corner in that city's punditocracy was rooted in their faith that the DNC chairman was supposed to be someone like them: a DC veteran who knew more about where to grab lunch near K Street than about the best diner in Keokuk, Iowa. Thus, they cheered as House minority leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate minority leader Harry Reid (as well as Kerry) all moved to block Dean's return to the fray. They never quite figured out that Dean was going to win because he'd been to that diner in Keokuk, and he'd met there with beleaguered grassroots Democrats who appreciated his saying, "We need to be proud to be Democrats"—and appreciated even more his suggestion that the way to express that pride is as a genuine opposition party.

'He doesn't put his finger up in the wind. He says we are the party of social justice.' —Randy Roy, Kansas DNC member

"Dean understands that the essence of a good political communicator is somebody who can execute strong message contrasts," says former DNC chair David Wilhelm, a Chicago-based pol who never quite fit into the Washington scene. "Maybe what seemed wild in a presidential candidate will seem much more normal in a chair of a national party." As such, Dean picked up lots of support from Democrats who were never Deaniacs but knew the party had to change. "The Washington axis tends to cast the question in terms of right versus left, but the better way of looking at it is outside versus inside," former Labor Secretary Robert Reich told a reporter. "The Republicans have somehow managed to root themselves outside of Washington, and it's worked to their advantage. But the Democrats are rooted now essentially inside the Senate. Ugh. The argument for Dean is that he'll help change that."

A story line being developed by Dean's critics, and some Dean enthusiasts, says his people took over the party. They didn't. Dean won the contest by doing what he did best during the 2004 campaign: relentlessly working the phones to connect with the people who do the heavy lifting in the party (he called the Arizona Democratic Party chair at 10:30 on a Saturday night to discuss the DNC race) and getting local activists in neglected corners of the country excited. "I was not going to vote for Howard Dean," says Randy Roy, a Topeka hotel owner and Kansas representative on the DNC. "Then I heard him and he won me over. He doesn't put his finger up in the wind. He says we are the party of social justice. We are the party that evens the playing field for the little guy. And he recognizes that we need to say that again and again and again."

The Washington-insider line on Dean was that he would be anathema to Democrats from "red" states like Kansas, where Kerry won only a single county. The reality was the opposite: Some of Dean's first major endorsements for chair came from party leaders in Alabama, Mississippi and, yes, Kansas. When Reid suggested that Justice Antonin Scalia would be an acceptable Chief Justice, Dean disagreed. That created a stir in Washington, including an "it's not your job to set policy" admonishment from outgoing chair Terry McAuliffe. But it didn't hurt Dean with DNC members. "That, to me, is one more reason to elect him chairman," says Roy.

Now that Dean is chairman, he'll have to strike a balance between grassroots Democrats, who want the party to be more muscular in opposition, and Congressional Democrats, who tend to believe, as Pelosi has argued, that the chair will "take his lead from us." Dean, who once ran the Democratic Governors Association and knows a lot about party etiquette, won't go to war with the Congressional leaders. But, as one Dean backer said, "He has to prod them. I mean, what's the point of making Dean party chair if he isn't going to get these people to use their backbones?" Dean's aides say he will lie low initially, looking for fights where he can put a charged-up party to work for Congressional Democrats, perhaps in defense of Social Security, perhaps in opposition to a Supreme Court nominee.

Dean will paper over a lot of tensions if he can make the DNC as essential for Democratic candidates as the RNC is for Republicans. Even before Dean's election as chair, the DNC made a major commitment to aid party nominees in 2005 contests for mayor of New York City and governor of New Jersey and Virginia. And the DNC will be all over the 2006 fights for the Senate, where Democrats will struggle to defend more seats than the GOP, and the House, where Democratic prospects should be somewhat better. But Dean's best chance to prove himself will be at the state and local levels, where three dozen governorships, attorneys general slots, control of state legislatures and thousands of county posts that are vital to rebuilding the party's infrastructure will be at stake. Dean's pledge to transform the party into a grassroots organization "that can win in all fifty states" will be put to the test. Dean—energized by the success that Democracy for America, the successor organization to his 2004 campaign, had in aiding successful local campaigns in places like Salt Lake County, Utah, and Montgomery, Alabama—relishes the prospect, an attitude that distinguishes him from predecessors who seldom found time for legislative races, let alone county commission contests.

Dean starts with a DNC that is financially sound—McAuliffe left a surplus, and Kerry just kicked in another $1 million from unspent campaign funds—and that has developed a broadened base of small donors. But Dean will need to expand that base, not only because it will free him and the party from the constraints placed on it in the 1990s by an overreliance on big donors and special interests but also because his ambitious program will require him to move a lot of money out of the DC headquarters, which McAuliffe spent so much time renovating. Dean's plan to spend at least $11 million annually to beef up state parties will

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be his most expensive early initiative. But he has a lot of big ideas. "The tools that were pioneered in my [presidential] campaign—like blogs and Meetups and streaming video—are just a start," he says. "We must use all of the power and potential of technology as part of an aggressive outreach to meet and include voters, to work with the state parties, and to influence media coverage."

One of the most intriguing measures of the difference between Dean and his DNC predecessors is the excitement his election has generated among people with big ideas about strategy and policy. Internet innovators like Zach Exley and Zephyr Teachout have already made smart proposals for how to push the technological envelope [see Katrina vanden Heuvel's February 13 "Editor's Cut" weblog at www.thenation.com]. But where Dean could cause the greatest stir is in championing bold new approaches that will again make the Democrats a party of ideas. He still converses with the wide circle of academics and activists who, during the 2004 campaign, transformed an initially cautious candidate into a champion of innovative proposals to create a national commission on how to restore democracy, break up media conglomerates and force corporations to provide not just a full financial accounting but also a social accounting of their adherence to environmental, labor and community standards. After the campaign finished, Dean kept talking to public intellectuals like Benjamin Barber, who introduced him to progressive leaders from around the world on a trip to Rome last year, and whose ideas about how America can relate to the world offer the party a framework for a positive internationalism.

What's genuinely exciting about the Dean chairmanship is the prospect that the party might come to mirror its new chief's enthusiasm for bold stances and strategies. Dean's best applause line in the race for DNC chair was, "We cannot win by being Republican-lite. We've tried it; it does not work." For all the important talk of rebuilding state parties and using new technologies, what matters most about Dean's election as DNC chair is his recognition that Democrats have to be serious about holding out to Americans the twin promises of reform and progress, and that they are not going to do that by tinkering with the status quo. "We just can't let the Republicans define the debate anymore. We have to be the party of ideas," Randy Roy says from Topeka. "Dean understands that we have to be the party that shakes things up." ■

DESPITE TALK OF CIVIL WAR, SUNNIS AND SHIITES SEEM MORE UNITED THAN DIVIDED.

Sects and Solidarity in Iraq

DAHR JAMAIL

Baghdad

Wrapped in his brown *abaya*, Sheik Sayak Kumait al-Asadi, a spokesman in Baghdad for the revered Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, is angry and forceful when speaking of both the US occupation and the suffering of the Shiites under the regime of Saddam Hussein. Above him hangs an ornately framed poster of Sistani.

PETER O. ZIERLEIN

The spokesman's point is clear: After decades of repression, now is the time for the Shiites to have power, no matter the price. "Most of the Sunnis are accepted by us, but there are those among them who don't want the Shia in the government, nor the Kurds. Some Sunnis will either kill us or make us slaves. We accept these elections now," says Asadi, pulling the *abaya* close over his shoulders. "But many Shias and Kurds believe dividing the country is the only real solution."

After all, the Shiites suffered horribly under the reign of the deposed dictator. Among the highly prominent Shiite ayatollahs killed by Saddam's men were the revered Mohammed Bakr Sadr, executed with his sister in 1980, and his cousin Mohammed Sadiq Sadr (the father of Muqtada al-Sadr), who was assassinated in 1999.

But Shiite loathing of the Sunni elite that oppressed them under Saddam does not translate into sympathy for the US occupiers. "We cannot push the Shia to accept any of the Westerners in our country," Asadi says while leaning forward for emphasis, "because they are the tail of the American snake."

With Shiite domination in the National Assembly, they will have much power in writing Iraq's new constitution. Will this lopsided dynamic provoke a violent reaction from the Sunni-dominated insurgency? If it does, will the Shiite militias, like the Badr Organization, the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), strike back, igniting a civil war?

When examining the statements of some political and religious leaders from both communities, one gets the sense that civil war is indeed imminent. Sheik Asadi's venom toward the Sunnis is matched by that of some of his Sunni counterparts toward the Shiites. But Western media outlets, focusing on the sensational, have played up the potential for civil war, muting the voices of Sunni and Shiite leaders who are skeptical of such predictions and united against partition. And on the ground, Sunnis and Shiites are much more intertwined by bonds of tribal affiliation and family than is commonly understood in the United States. Descend from the politically charged worlds of the Shiite imams, Sunni sheiks and mainstream media to the realm of everyday people, and the danger of civil war seems more remote.

Dahr Jamail (www.dahrjamailiraq.com) is an independent freelance journalist who has been reporting from Iraq. He has contributed to the Sunday Herald, *Inter Press Service,* Democracy Now! *and* Flashpoints *on Pacifica Radio, as well as the BBC and Radio Hong Kong.*

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A gaunt mujahedeen fighter—fresh from the ruins of Falluja where he had been inspecting the rubble of his former home—agrees to meet me in Baghdad. He is ready to die fighting America, but he went back to Falluja because he'd also like to recover whatever belongings of his might still exist. By his account, even in Falluja—the geographic and political heart of the Sunni resistance—there are vivid examples of just how connected Sunnis and Shiites can be, not only by family but also in their opposition to the US occupation.

"We sent fighters to Najaf when the Americans were attacking our Muslim brothers," says the nervous, high-strung muj fighter, referring to the intifada Sadr called last summer. "They helped us when the invaders were attacking our city last April; they helped us again this time, and we will never forget that."

During the April siege of Falluja, I saw crowds of Shiites at the Abu Hanifa Mosque in the heavily Sunni and Baathist Baghdad neighborhood of al-Adhamiya loading trucks with bags of food, blood for transfusions and many young male "humanitarian" volunteers—all ready for shipment to besieged Falluja.

Even among religious and politically active Shiites, many feel that a geographical divide along sectarian lines is not the answer.

And today a sampling of opinion among regular Baghdadis, both Sunnis and Shiites, makes the chances of civil war appear slim. "I don't believe civil war will happen," remarks Amin Rathman, a 43-year-old owner of an Internet cafe in Baghdad. College students bustle about, making copies of term papers and drinking tea together as a patrol of US Humvees rumbles by outside a window recently shattered by gunfire. Rathman says he believes that although Iraq is in a precarious position and vulnerable to the provocations of the worst elements in the political parties, Islam, nationalism and patriotism will unite the country. "There are reasonable people in these political parties who will see that at the end of the day we are all Muslim, and we are all Iraqi, so sectarian differences are certainly no reason to begin a civil war."

Some leaders, both Sunni and Shiite, echo this view, but tensions are rising. The January 30 vote—forced upon the United States by Sistani's January 2004 call for protests demanding elections—was marred by a widespread Sunni boycott. The elections, which produced a triumphant slate of Shiite politicians, the United Iraqi Alliance backed by Sistani, has amplified friction between Sunni and Shiite leaders. The UIA includes the Dawa and SCIRI parties, as well as the Iraqi National Congress, led by Ahmad Chalabi, among others.

Even among the more religious and politically active Shiites, however, many feel that a geographical divide along sectarian lines is not the answer to Iraq's problems.

"We are against any kind of division to the country," says Ahmed al-Asadi, the public relations officer for the Dawa Party, speaking from his office in the upscale Monsoor district of the capital city just after the elections. He believes dividing Iraq would lead to foreign control of the political, social and economic sectors, which he vehemently opposes.

"We will not fight each other as they mention in the media," Asadi says while folding his hands together and leaning back in his chair. "There is no hope for civil war as our enemies want, and I don't think true Iraqis want this." The spokesman acknowledges divisions between the sects, but adds, "This doesn't mean that these divisions will fight each other."

At the headquarters of SCIRI in Baghdad, Redah Jawad Taki, head of political relations for the powerful party, expresses similar views. "There are divisions and each division has its thoughts, but it doesn't mean that these divisions will prevent the Shiite from unity with our Sunni brothers and among ourselves," he says. "Our enemies are waiting for us to start fighting each other, [but] that will never happen." Their headquarters was car-bombed before the elections, but Taki dismisses concern that the attack might have set off a cycle of violence. "We have no evidence saying that an Iraqi Muslim Sunni is assassinating an Iraqi Muslim Shiite," he says. "The one who will accept the division of our country will agree that our country stays under the occupation."

Sheik Ghaith al-Timini al-Kadhimi, deputy spokesman for the Sadr office in the sprawling slum of Sadr City, Baghdad, is further out on the spectrum of opinion. When asked if he feels recent attacks on Shiite mosques and assassinations of Shiite political figures could spark civil war, he replies, rather ominously, "I don't think that our brothers, the Sunnis, will commit such crimes against the Shiite, but if we find some persons who commit these crimes they are executing a foreign and a Zionist plan inside the country aiming that we will fight each other, and this is the civil war that the Americans and most satellites are speaking about."

Dr. Wamid Omar Nadhmi, a senior political scientist at Baghdad University and a Sunni, believes any talk of division is an overreaction to past grievances.

"When we've had a society with no free flow of ideas, you get obsessions from certain groups and individuals," he explains on his porch overlooking the Tigris River in Baghdad. But Nadhmi believes that these are peripheral ideas that lack broad popular support. "Don't underestimate Iraqi patriotism, and don't overestimate sectarian divisions, because in the final analysis, Shia and Sunni are Muslims," he says, while Apache helicopters rumble low over the brown, muddy waters that separate his home from the concrete blocks demarcating the Green Zone.

Expressing a commonly held view in Baghdad, Professor Nadhmi says, "This civil war is only in the brain of the American decision-maker, and perhaps he himself is aware that there is no civil strife between Shia and Sunni, but [attempts] to use it as a pretext."

After watching the black silhouettes of the helicopters grow smaller against the setting sun, he adds, "The Americans are actually saying, 'Let us stay in your country. Let us kill you, Iraqis, because we don't like you to kill each other.'"

Imam Mu'ayad al-Adhami of the Abu Hanifa Mosque in Baghdad also blames foreign influence for the recent talk of rising sectarian tensions. "The Americans are using divide and conquer to try to split the Muslims of Iraq," he says softly, while gesturing with his large hands. "But Iraqi society is Muslim first and tribal second. That means Sunni and Shia are relatives, often in the same family with so many links and intermarriages. This is our society, and anyone trying to divide us is blind to these facts."

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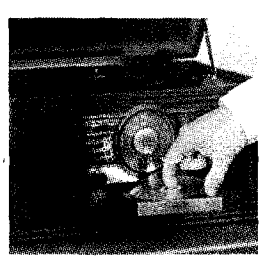

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The sheik offers several examples of solidarity between the two sects. Last year, when his Shiite neighbors in the Khadamiya district just across the Tigris from Adhamiya were struck by a devastating suicide bomb attack during the Ashura holiday, his was the first mosque to ask people to donate blood.

"We didn't feel any different from them," emphasizes Sheik Mu'ayad. "They are Muslims and we must help them. When they analyzed the donated blood for our brothers and sisters in Khadamiya, they couldn't tell if it was Sunni or Shia blood."

A visit to Baghdad University reinforces the sense that Iraqi nationalism and Islamic identity are more deeply felt than sectarian allegiances. Despite the fact that the university suffered looting in the aftermath of the invasion and much of it remains in disrepair, the campus, now home to more than 100 refugee families from Falluja, remains an island of normalcy for college students of both sects of Islam. Most do not foresee sectarian differences necessitating civil war or the partition of their country.

"There is not a split between Sunni and Shia here. We are all Iraqi," says Intisar Hammad. The 21-year-old physics student, who is a Shiite, adds, "There are enemies of Iraq who want us to be separate, but we are all Muslims and our constitution is the Koran."

Another Baghdad University student named Saif feels the same. "There is no split. We are together. We are one."

Such declarations of national unity aside, the specter of civil war looms in the back of Iraqi minds as the political machinations grind forward. Tensions continue to swirl over Kirkuk, the oil-rich city claimed by the country's Kurdish minority, whose power was vastly inflated by the recent elections. The lack of Sunni representation in the National Assembly, meanwhile, could set the stage for a reinvigorated insurgency, which could in turn stoke Shiite resentment and threaten the new government. The Bush Administration declared the elections a success simply because they occurred, but their success or failure will truly be decided as these possibilities unfold in the coming months.

Even before the National Assembly drafts the new constitution, debate over US withdrawal is likely to intensify, with Sadr and Sistani staking out distinct positions: While Sistani appears to favor allowing more time for withdrawal, Sadr announced just days after the elections that an immediate timetable for US withdrawal was the only solution.

The highly influential Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars recently restated its demand that occupation forces provide a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq and remain in their bases until this is accomplished. The group also announced that they regard the recent elections as completely illegitimate and will not respect any government created by them. Interestingly, however, they also said they would be open to joining the political process in drafting the constitution if a timetable for the withdrawal of occupation forces was announced.

Whatever their views on the timetable, one theme most Iraqis seem to agree on, whether Shiite or Sunni, religious leaders or ordinary people, is that the foreign power in Iraq must depart, leaving Iraqis to sort out their sectarian and ethnic differences.

As Wamid Nadhmi says, "It will take Iraqis something like a quarter of a century to rebuild their country, to heal their wounds, to reform their society, to bring about some sort of national reconciliation, democracy and tolerance of each other. But that process will not begin until the US occupation of Iraq ends." ■

A LOOK AT THE REAL EUROPE—AND AT THE REAL ISSUES IT HAS WITH U.S. POLICY.

Europe by, and for, Itself

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

George W. Bush will attend a NATO summit in Brussels on February 22, dine with French President Jacques Chirac, confer with German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in Mainz, Germany, and on the final day of his tour meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Bratislava. The White House insists that its quarrels with Europe over Iraq can be buried, more or less decently.

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Many US commentators agree, but many Europeans do not. To be sure, even as determined an adversary of the war as Schröder thinks it more polite to speak of common goals. He has said, however, that he is ready to argue over means. It was at Worms, near Mainz, that Luther defied the Catholic Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire with the phrase, "Here I stand." Schröder is Protestant enough to remind the US President that world politics is not a matter of atmosphere or gesture but of substance. Indeed, Bush will already have heard from Chirac and others in Brussels that most of Europe can neither be commanded nor cajoled into obedience. Even the usually acquiescent British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has found his own voice on a matter repugnant to Bush—international measures to combat global warming. Europe's differences with the United States are magnified by Bush's unilateralism, but fundamentally they are consequences of Europe's sense of its present place in history. About that, Bush's official and unofficial advisers have taught him practically nothing. What does he need to learn?

We can begin by looking beneath the surface of Europe's troubles, even torments, with its great experiment, the European Union. Originally intended to defend Western Europe's autonomy against the two superpowers, the EU has been altered immensely

Norman Birnbaum is professor emeritus, Georgetown University Law Center. His most recent book is After Progress: American Social Reform and European Socialism in the Twentieth Century *(Oxford).*

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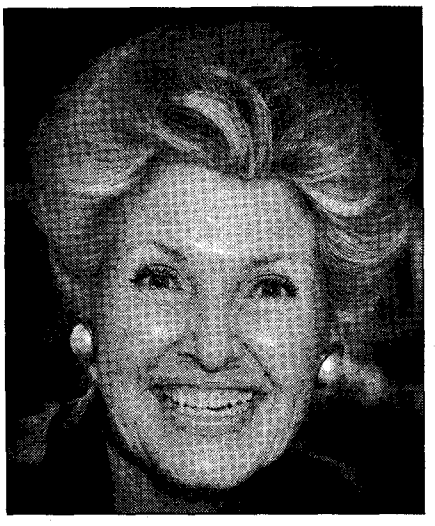

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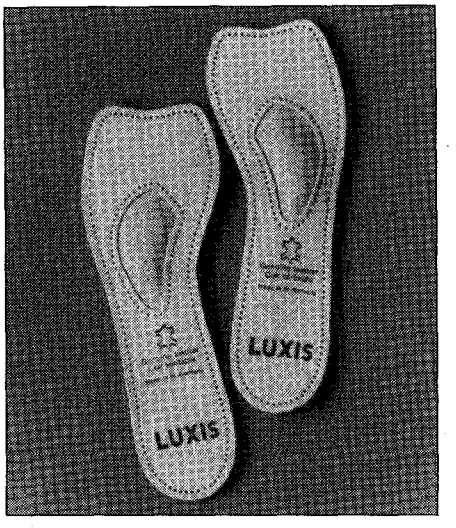
- ❑ PAIN IN THE BALLS OF YOUR FEET
- ❑ BURNING NERVE ENDINGS
- ❑ CRAMPING
- ❑ PAINFUL ANKLES
- ❑ HAMMERTOES



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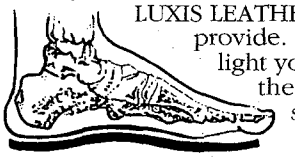

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by the opening and incorporation of Central and Eastern Europe. The original six members have been expanded to twenty-five, and the union is about to begin negotiations with Turkey. The Europeans are unable to agree on what the expanded EU should become—a federal state, a larger economic union, an alliance to defend culture and territory, an engaged force in the world or a defensive moat against it. They have written a new constitution, in which major decisions will be taken by vote of separate national governments, leaving the directly elected European Parliament where it is now, exceedingly vocal but relatively powerless.

Europe's political elites argue that only by uniting can Europe deal with the United States and the rest of the world. However, they continue to defend national interests in the EU's budgetary and legislative bargaining. When Europeans vote for their representatives in the European Parliament, they frequently express domestic grievances, and participation in European elections is far lower than in national ones. European publics agree with the elites: They want an effective EU, but they think (rightly) that European institutions are remote and that the proposed changes will not improve matters.

A majority of Europeans find the policies of the American right repugnant—and the US claim to world leadership intolerable.

Nowhere is this clearer than in economic policy. Doctrines of the virtues of "competitiveness" and of the superior efficiency of the private sector have been adopted by the European Commission, the permanent bureaucracy that regulates the European economy. The commission has embarked on a path of accelerated deregulation, rejecting socially directed investment and seeking to replace much of the European social model. That model insists there are public goods—culture, education, environment, health—that cannot be measured by criteria of profitability. Economic dogmatism also marks the policies of the European Central Bank, which claims that achieving full employment is not its task. Indeed, the introduction of the euro was part of a bargain in which EU nations renounced making full employment a top priority.

The EU is a free-trade zone, with some worker protections and social legislation, but it is especially deficient regarding long-term investment strategy. It does have a project for increased public expenditure for education, infrastructure and technology. Its premise, however, is that a modernized private sector will do the rest. Meanwhile, the private sector is disinvesting in the parts of Europe with the highest wages and moving to zones within and outside Europe with cheap labor. The new president of the European Commission, former Portuguese Prime Minister José Barroso, has just proposed even more deregulation.

In the past half-century, social Christian and socialist movements alike, joined by the trade unions and civic associations, made belief in the necessity and morality of public control of the market a central theme of European politics. Society prospered, culturally and materially. Now, a newly combative European capitalism has counterattacked. And the political parties are no longer spiritual families, like the churches. They have become machines geared to produce electoral victories, leaving the rest of society to itself. The churches increasingly resemble sects, struggling against marginalization. The ensuing vacuum has been filled with the ideologies and sensibilities of the market. The mass media have dropped much of their former seriousness and are almost as trivialized as their American counterparts.

Of course, there is resistance, but it is indifferently led. The survivors of the 1960s, now approaching retirement, include British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, his German colleague Joschka Fischer, Chancellor Schröder, former Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema and former French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. They do not excite their voters or frighten their adversaries. Especially when in government, the older socialist parties in Germany, Spain, Sweden and Britain are devoid of vision. Perhaps new ideas will come from movements, like ATTAC in France, that seek alternative modes of globalization and call for experiments with new forms of local self-determination. They are represented in the Green parties but have been slow to penetrate the socialist ones.

Let us survey Europe's political map. In Italy, Romano Prodi, a social Catholic who was once prime minister and then president of the European Commission, hopes to lead a center-left coalition against Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in the 2006 election. The coalition's parties failed, however, to agree on a unified slate for the forthcoming regional elections. Berlusconi hangs on, despite judicial condemnation of himself and his closest associates. His government is an alliance of "entrepreneurial" exploiters, parasitic looters of the state, resentful provincials and xenophobes. The programs on his own TV stations and the public ones he controls make Murdoch and Fox seem enlightened. The old Communist Party, the critical Catholics and the secular middle class were led for decades by an educated intelligentsia deeply implanted in civil society. That society resisted the crude ideology of the cold war and endemic governmental corruption. Its contemporary heirs still resist (recall the vast demonstrations against the Iraq War), but the leaders have been unwilling to place their organizations entirely at the service of the citizens who want Berlusconi defeated. By contrast, he holds a heterogeneous coalition together by appealing to the lowest common denominators of Italian life: civic withdrawal, status anxiety and vulgar prejudice.

In Britain, despite much opposition in the electorate to Blair's alliance with Bush, and to Blair's creeping authoritarianism, the Labour Party is likely to win the general election later this year. The Tories alarm those who fear their intended demolition of the welfare state, and do not inspire those who seek it. The Liberal Democrats are unconvincing in their vow to make Britain independent of the United States, and vague about everything else. Millions will stifle their doubts and vote for Labour. Once re-elected, Blair might at some point be dropped by his own party. Meanwhile, Blair's permanent heir-in-waiting, Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has poured money into public services. While many governments on the Continent have professed social-democratic ideals of solidarity while practicing market capitalism (the last French Socialist government was one), Britain's Labour professes adherence to market capitalism while practicing a decent minimum of social democracy. Perhaps that accounts for the perpetually pained expression on Blair's face: He lacks the courage of his absence of socialist conviction.

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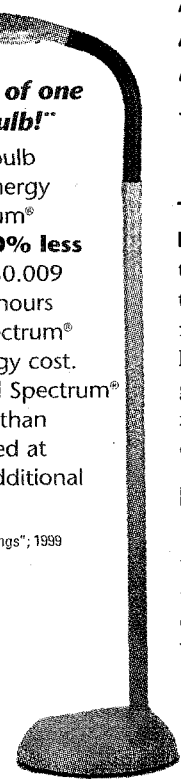

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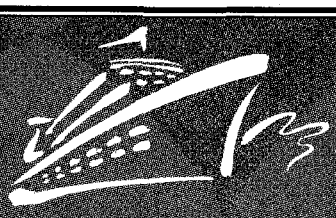

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The other great party of European social democracy, the German Social Democrats, might return to office in 2006. Like Britain's Labour, they face weak opposition. Like Labour, too, they have lost a substantial number of members and are now bereft even of slogans. Faced with an especially intense counteroffensive by German capital, they have adopted the term "reform" to describe reductions in the scope of the welfare state. No one has been fooled, but the party's fortunes in the polls did improve when Chancellor Schröder admitted what he was doing instead of claiming an advance toward utopia. The Greens, his coalition partner, profit from their consistency on issues like civil rights, the environment and international development responsibility. They have no long tradition to abandon, and have livelier and younger leaders, even if Foreign Minister Fischer has all too obviously remade himself into a statesman. Some social activists and trade unionists have abandoned the party to contest the state elections in North-Rhine Westphalia in May with their own ticket. If successful, they could join the post-Communist Party of Democratic Socialism (present only in eastern Germany) in a new formation of the left. It is entirely unclear whether they will have any success, and some of the protest potential may be exploited by far rightists and neo-Nazis. The Social Democrats retain an involuntary monopoly on honesty: Unlike their critics, they admit that they do not know how to master the new capitalism, so they alternate between attempts to improve its performance (for example, by resorting to deficit financing to stimulate demand) and attempts to curb the limitless rapacity of Germany's managers.

One European ideology is alive and well, in France and beyond: Gaullism. However, the contrast between Charles de Gaulle and his pygmy successors is large. Gaullism was once bound to a specific historical moment, when Europe needed a distinctive voice as the two superpowers sought to divide the world between themselves. Jacques Chirac, after four decades in and out of office, is cheered throughout Europe as the leader of the opposition to US power; but his party was decisively defeated in recent regional elections, his government is weak and his putative challenger and successor, Nicolas Sarkozy, evinces a political morality and style reminiscent of the late Richard Nixon. Chirac, at least, understands the universal appeal of Gaullism. De Gaulle withdrew from Algeria and (at Phnom Penh in 1966) predicted the disasters that would befall imperial America. The Gaullist state joins modernization to social solidarity. When the nation rebelled in 1997 against Chirac's plans for more of the market and less of the republic, Chirac learned his lesson. The Socialists may or may not win the presidential and legislative elections of 2007, but they will have the consolation of knowing that there is not much difference between social Gaullism and their version of socialism. At the most recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Chirac disinterred de Gaulle's interest in the Third World by proposing a tax on international financial transactions to fund development aid.

Finally, there is the courage of the new Spanish Socialist government. Not only has it withdrawn troops from Iraq; it has challenged the Catholic Church to accept that Spain is a liberal society and does not wish clerical tutelage. The government is not doing much about the economy, other than trying to reduce exorbitant housing costs. Instead, in a series of measures in culture, education and social life (especially regarding women's rights), it is attack-

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ing the traditionalism that has survived the three decades since the end of Francoism. These measures are strenuously opposed by the Catholic bishops and opposition conservatives of the Popular Party, but they have wide support across the social classes. Even more divisive is the government's policy of extending more autonomy to the regions, which has provoked near-violent responses by those who cannot bear the thought of a more federal Spain. The Socialists have one invaluable if unwitting ally: former Prime Minister José María Aznar, who cannot contain his resentment at his chosen successor's defeat last year. No calumny or falsehood is too embarrassing for Aznar to utter, and the more he talks, the less chance his Popular Party has of returning to office in the near future. He has been an honored guest at the White House while contesting the legitimacy of Spain's elected government. The official US foreign policy apparatus has frequently disregarded diplomatic courtesies and snubbed the Spanish government. It remains only to ask what the CIA has been doing in the country.

Immigration, especially but not exclusively by Muslims, has led to racial divisiveness like that in the United States. The loud opposition to Turkey's admission to the EU serves as compensation for what many Europeans experience as a loss of their cohesion and distinctiveness. They are attacking an easy but false target. Some years ago a Socialist interior minister of France, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, told his nation, "You know very well that it is not the Tunisian grocer down the street or the Moroccan auto mechanic around the corner who threatens your identity; it is global capitalism." But global capitalism is an abstract problem, while immigration, with its pressure on employment, housing, schools and social benefits, is a very visible one. The murder of the Dutch social activist Theo van Gogh by an Islamist fanatic, the recruitment by Al Qaeda of Muslims in Europe, the Madrid train bombing, the angry separatism of the immigrant communities in several nations—as well as effective discrimination against them in employment and the subsequent social pathologies of immigrant communities—attest to Europe's incomplete integration of immigrants. That has led to electoral successes for the fascists and xenophobes in local elections in Britain and regional ones in Belgium and in eastern Germany, where a pathological nostalgia for the Third Reich afflicts young people raised under Stalinism. Apart from promising to limit immigration, the democratic parties are united by a common helplessness in the face of the problem.

Like old-fashioned anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant feelings are an emotive shorthand for resentment at all the changes burdening Europe. These attitudes are not the monopoly of the racist skinheads who disfigure the landscape in several nations. The center-right government of Denmark boasts of its draconian anti-immigrant policies. The campaign for "a Christian Europe" (sometimes termed Judeo-Christian Europe) mounted by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and others attacks not only Muslims but Europe's secularists and modern Christians. An Italian Catholic ally of Berlusconi, Professor Rocco Buttiglione, lost a post as European commissioner for justice, freedom and security before he could assume it after he told the European Parliament that although he would be fair to homosexuals, he believes homosexuality is sinful. Buttiglione, a friend of our own Justice Antonin Scalia, now absurdly terms himself a Christian martyr.

Opponents of the Occupation Condemn Attacks on Iraqi Trade Unionists

We, who opposed the U.S.-led war on Iraq and who call for an immediate end to the occupation of that country, are appalled by the torture and assassination in Baghdad on January 4, 2005 of Hadi Salih, International Officer of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU). There are also disturbing reports of intimidation, death threats and murders targeting other IFTU members, trade unionists in general, and political activists.

We utterly condemn the assassination of Hadi Salih. We call upon all sides in the conflict in Iraq to respect the rights of non-combatants as required by international law and to recognize the rights of workers to organize freely, without threat or harm, in trade unions of their own choosing in accordance with International Labor Organization (ILO) standards.

We believe that the physical targeting of trade unionists is in no way politically or morally acceptable, even though we disagree strongly with the IFTU's support of UN Resolution 1546, which supports the U.S. military presence in Iraq. This resolution has been used by the Bush Administration to justify keeping U.S. troops in the country.

We also oppose the victory of those elements of the resistance whose agenda is to impose a repressive, authoritarian regime on the Iraqi people, whether that regime is Baathist or theocratic-fundamentalist. We do not know whether such authoritarian elements have gained decisive control over the resistance to the U.S. forces and their Iraqi and international allies. We do know, however, that the continuing occupation of Iraq, which grows more brutal with every passing day, only strengthens these elements, increases their influence over the resistance and makes their ultimate victory more likely.

We further oppose the occupation because it is part and parcel of an imperial U.S. foreign policy that shores up undemocratic regimes like those of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, gives one-sided support to Israel against the Palestinians, and promotes unjust, inequitable economic policies throughout the world. Not only in Iraq but throughout the Middle East and globally U.S. foreign and military policy either directly or indirectly subverts freedom and democracy.

Please join Stanley Aronowitz, Medea Benjamin, Norman Birnbaum, Eileen Boris, Carl Bromley, Noam Chomsky, Joshua Cohen, Marc Cooper, Richard Deats, Daniel Ellsberg, Carlos Espinosa, Gertrude Ezorsky, Barry Finger, Barbara Garson, Jill Godmilow, Linda Gordon, Gary Groth, Mina Hamilton, Thomas Harrison, Doug Henwood, Michael Hirsch, Adam Hochschild, Allen Hunter, Doug Ireland, Joanne Landy, Assaf Kfoury, Hany Khalil, Jesse Lemisch, John Leonard, Sue Leonard, Mark LeVine, Nelson Lichtenstein, Betty Reid Mandell, Marvin Mandell, David McReynolds, Timothy Mitchell, David Newby, Molly Nolan, David Oakford, Mike Parker, Glenn Perusek, Frances Fox Piven, Katha Pollitt, Nancy Romer, Ruth Rosen, Matthew Rothschild, Jennifer Scarlott, Jay Schaffner, Jason Schulman, Lynne Schwartz, Stephen Shalom, Sunil Sharma, Adam Shatz, Alan Sokal, Chris Toensing, Howard Wallace, Juanita Webster, Immanuel Wallerstein, Lois Weiner, Naomi Weisstein, Reginald Wilson, John Womack, Jr., Kent Worcester, and others in signing this statement. *Signersí names and affiliations (for identification only)*

To: Joanne Landy, Thomas Harrison, Jennifer Scarlott, Co-Directors, CPD

☐ Please add my name to the list of signers to the CPD *Opponents of the Occupation Condemn Attacks on Iraqi Trade Unionists*. You may use my name when the statement is published.

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Many European Christians regard the episode as an embarrassment and hope for another wave of reform in the Roman Catholic Church like that of the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s. European majorities generally accept the complexity and pluralism of modernity in a way many Americans (and not just the religious traditionalists) cannot.

This is the Europe Bush will be visiting—to lecture them on democracy and insist on their sacred duty to follow our leadership in matters large and small. Will someone in the White House dare to give Bush a recent German Marshall Fund Poll that showed large European majorities strongly opposed to the idea of subordinating themselves in such a way? Despite rhetorical professions of acceptance of European integration, there is one primary American policy toward Europe: to enfeeble it by splitting it. That goal connects the refusal to collaborate with the Europeans on the governance of the world economy (the strong euro, favored by the US Treasury, limits EU exports and thus exacerbates the Continent's economic stagnation) with the campaign to denigrate Europe—drawing on our own limitless national reserves of philistinism.

On the other hand, there is a substantial pro-American party in Europe that regards US power as indispensable to its own projects. It comprises academics, publicists and politicians who favor a Europe-US alliance of limitless duration and scope. Europe's bankers and industrialists are allied with American capital (heavily invested in Europe) in an attack on the European welfare state. Blair and Berlusconi are not Washington's only servants on the Continent. European Commission president Barroso was a compliant US ally as Portuguese prime minister. Now he is more discreet, but an autonomous Europe is not his most obvious goal. The Dutch secretary general of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, seems to be speaking not only for but from the White House.

Nevertheless, a majority of Europeans find the policies of the American right repugnant. Even if Bush were back in Texas, profound differences—on the environment, the relationship between market and society, the death penalty and secularism—would divide the continents. Given that a majority of the European public and its elites find the US claim to world leadership increasingly intolerable, sooner or later institutions like NATO will have to be replaced by much more limited forms of transatlantic cooperation. Schröder has just shocked the pro-American party in Europe, and of course the US foreign policy apparatus, by declaring NATO superseded and calling for a new US-EU relationship.

In the meantime, Europeans are struggling, against continuous US interference, to build a common foreign and military policy. Leadership in that effort falls to Chirac and Schröder. Their support in Europe is substantial, and they are backed by the Continent's cultural elite, who know a great deal about the United States, not least about our own opposition. Two great modern philosophers, the late Jacques Derrida of France and Jürgen Habermas of Germany, described the refusal to join the Iraq War as a European declaration of independence. The intellectuals, in this case, are quite practical. Historical identities are not inscribed in texts but in political acts. The more the United States tries to sabotage the European project, the more support for it will grow. Nothing in the present alignment of forces will change rapidly, while severe setbacks to the process of European integration are possible. But its achievement, in the end, would constitute a huge gain for those in our own nation who seek a decent internationalism. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

"Modern military forces, both nuclear and conventional, can be used to threaten or destroy, but no longer to defend or win a politically meaningful victory," he asserted. Decrying the squandering of this wealth, he calculated that the $30 billion being spent on war in Vietnam alone was more than the entire capital fund for worldwide economic development.

Today, with even greater human and environmental sacrifices being made to war, Melman's mantra rings especially true: "The remaining military strategy for improving the military security of nation states—large and small—is now disarmament." DIANA SCOTT

PALESTINIAN ELECTION LACUNA

Seattle

■ In "Why Marwan Did Not Run" [Jan. 10/17], I'm perplexed as to why Graham Usher said nothing about the candidacy of the other Barghouti, Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi (a distant cousin of Marwan Barghouti). Is *The Nation* part of yet another "media lockdown" on stories it doesn't want the US public to know about? On one of the last critical days of campaigning, Mustafa Barghouthi was blocked from crossing the Erez checkpoint in Gaza due to its closure but given no reason for the closure. Buried deep in a January 6 *New York Times* article the closure was mentioned: A Palestinian had attacked and damaged the checkpoint; it was closed for repairs. The US media, including *The Nation*, should be informing its readers about the Palestinian candidates and their election campaigns so we can make a fair assessment as to the legitimacy of these elections. Much is at stake—the prospects of a lasting peace in the Middle East, and peace in the world. MARJOLEIN VAN DER VEEN

USHER REPLIES

Ramallah

■ I said nothing about the candidacy of Mustafa Barghouthi, who came in a distant but respectable second to Mahmoud Abbas, because my brief for the article was to look at the divisions in Fatah thrown up by Arafat's death and the struggle for the succession. Fatah is the dominant political force in Palestinian politics, and it was clear that whoever won the support of the movement would win the presidency.

As for Barghouthi's strong showing, I would make two comments: First, it is too soon to say whether the support he received represents a new force in Palestinian politics, between Fatah's nationalism and Hamas's Islamism. With Marwan's withdrawal—and Hamas's decision to boycott the poll—the view of many Palestinians was that Abbas was a shoo-in (one of the reasons for the relatively low turnout). Thus, many Palestinians may have voted for Barghouthi in the luxury of knowing he stood no chance of defeating Abbas.

Second, polls routinely confirm that 20 to 30 percent of Palestinians show no preference for either Hamas or Fatah but do subscribe to the values and policies advocated by Barghouthi—a secular democratic movement committed to domestic reform and a two-state solution based on Israel's full withdrawal to the 1967 borders, Palestinian sovereignty in East Jerusalem and a just resolution of the Palestinian refugees' right of return based on UN resolutions.

It is not yet clear whether Barghouthi is the voice for that constituency. It will become clear with the Palestinian parliamentary elections in July, should he and his National Democratic movement contest them. But it *is* clear that such a constituency wants a voice. GRAHAM USHER

CORRECTION

■ In Richard Goldstein's "Cartoon Wars" [Feb 21] it should say Joe, not John, Scarborough.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

In Radical Matrimony

BAZ DREISINGER

Thunder in Guyana

Suzanne Wasserman's documentary *Thunder in Guyana*, which airs on PBS's Independent Lens series at 10 PM on February 22, is the first in-depth look at Janet Jagan, former president of Guyana. Attribute that to the subject's obscurity: Guyana is roughly the size of Britain, but as an economically strapped country whose population grazes 800,000, it's a blip on America's radar.

Or attribute it to the subject's enormity: Jagan's life story is so much larger than life, it's almost too cinematic for cinema. That story delivers dramatic narrative tropes—rebellion, revolution, racial tension—in operatic proportions. It begins in 1943, when Janet Rosenberg, a pretty Jewish girl from Chicago, immigrates to the land of her new husband, Cheddi Jagan, the son of East Indian sugar workers in what was then the colony of British Guiana. It ends in 1997, when 77-year-old Janet Jagan takes the helm of what is now Guyana—to become the only American-born woman elected president of any country.

Guyana's story, like Jagan's, is familiar yet fantastic, at once a typical postcolonial ordeal of independence and creolization, and a grotesque hyperbole of these things, punctuated by crises—race riots, rigged elections, political paranoia—that make our 2000 election woes feel like, well, a blip on the radar.

Considering the grand scale of her subject, first-time filmmaker Wasserman—a cousin of Janet Jagan's and associate director of the CUNY Graduate Center's Gotham Center for New York City History—had her work cut out for her. Recounting the life of a politician is itself a challenge, because it means striking a compelling balance between two narratives that threaten to overwhelm each other: history and (in Jagan's case) her story, public and private. When these two halves of the saga are as sensational as they are here, achieving this balance is more than a challenge; it's an all-out battle between competing narratives. *Thunder in Guyana* navigates that battle, but just barely. Its goal is lofty, particularly for a fifty-minute documentary: to give us public and private—not just Janet Jagan but Janet Rosenberg.

Set during Guyana's 1997 election, *Thunder in Guyana* is a deftly edited fusion of newssreel footage, photos and interviews with Janet Jagan, her two children and her political allies. The film is narrated by Wasserman, who embarks on an odyssey to flesh out the cousin she knows via weathered photographs and family gossip. It lands her in Georgetown, Guyana, where Jagan pilots her campaign headquarters with grandmotherly repose. Wasserman voices the skepticism that her cousin clearly lacks: "I wondered if the Guyanese people would really elect a 77-year-old American-born Jewish woman for president." The film is thus framed as a question: How did Rosenberg become Jagan, and how did Guiana become Guyana?

America has produced one female president, Janet Jagan née Rosenberg, a Marxist Jew who briefly ruled Guyana, her adoptive land.

It began, we learn, as a love story. Beautiful, athletic, fiercely intellectual Janet Rosenberg met dental student Cheddi Jagan during her college years in Chicago. Both were fervently committed to Marxist politics and, soon, to each other. To Janet's family, Cheddi was a triple blow—"a foreigner, a person who wasn't white, a person who wasn't Jewish," Jagan says—but by 1943, an undeterred Janet ("nothing much frightens me," she shrugs) had married Cheddi and was off to rural British Guiana, where she found her rightful place: not in the kitchen with the women but in political trade

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unions with the men. In 1950 Janet, Cheddi and London-educated lawyer Forbes Burnham launched the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which propounded ardent socialism in a newsletter titled *Thunder*.

The PPP represented more than national unity. A country that naturally confounds categories—geographically, it is South American; culturally and politically, it is Caribbean—Guyana is known as "the land of six peoples" because it's a postcolonial *pilau*, born of Amerindian natives, European colonizers, African slaves and indentured servants from China, Portugal and East India, imported to work the plantations after Britain abolished slavery in its colonies in 1833. An alliance between the Indo-Guyanese Cheddi and the Afro-Guyanese Burnham was thus an alliance of Guyana's principal ethnic groups. Although Janet eluded any such category, in 1953—when Cheddi was elected the first Marxist leader in the Western Hemisphere—she became Guyana's Minister and Deputy Speaker of Parliament. In the American press, she was likened to Eva Perón and vilified as "the ablest Communist organizer in the Western Hemisphere," adept at spreading "propaganda among the hungry, ignorant natives."

As Cheddi's story takes center stage, then, Janet's is never just its footnote: A bright-red expatriate, she attracted all the attention her husband did. It was not the right kind of attention: 133 days after Cheddi assumed office, Winston Churchill sent troops into Georgetown to topple a so-called Communist regime. It was the end of a golden era, because it was followed by a racial rift that now defines Guyanese life: Burnham moved far to the right of Jagan, founding an opposition party—the People's National Congress (PNC)—that appealed directly to Afro-Guyanese voters, exploiting their fears of Indo-Guyanese domination. Gang-style political warfare erupted in most Caribbean countries, but thanks to its uniquely diverse population, Guyana (like the similarly populated Trinidad and Suriname) added race to the mix and bred a monster: *apanjaat*, or divisive racial politics. Afro-Guyanese endorsed the PNC; Indo-Guyanese stood with the PPP; exceptions to that rule were scarce.

The US government, for its part, regarded *apanjaat* as a way of weakening Cheddi Jagan, and worked covertly to encourage this shameless race-baiting. Re-elected in both 1957 and 1961, he confronted a hostile media in Britain and the United States, where his socialist convictions made cold war leaders shudder. "Where do you stand on this fundamental division in the world today, between Communism and Western democracy?" an O'Reilly-like anchor asks him on *Meet the Press*, in language eerily reminiscent of President Bush's evocation of a world starkly divided between the forces of "freedom" and those of "terror," between us and them.

While the PPP's mission statement—"to build a just socialist society, in which the industries of the country shall be socially and democratically owned"—was clear enough, Cheddi refused to take sides in the cold war: "I don't like this sort of either Communist or West, you know? I think this tendency toward black or white is a tendency which can lead to a lot of harm," he tells a reporter. America, however, turned a deaf ear to this reasoning, determined as it was to avoid another defeat in the Caribbean after the Bay of Pigs. So the CIA committed what Kennedy adviser and historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. later admitted was "a great injustice" against Cheddi Jagan, funding strikes and race riots in Georgetown in an effort to destabilize his government. (Schlesinger's apology, delivered to Jagan at the *Nation* offices in 1990, was the subject of the magazine's June 4 lead editorial that year.) As the violence spread, scores of people died, Guyana's economy was crippled, a state of emergency was declared and, by tweaking Guyana's electoral system (Britain replaced popular with proportional representation), the West got its wish: In 1964 Burnham became Guyana's president. And in 1966, with the country still in a state of emergency, Guyana became independent.

In the American press, Jagan was likened to Eva Perón and vilified as 'the ablest Communist organizer in the Western Hemisphere.'

Burnham is hardly seen in *Thunder in Guyana*—no PNC advocates are interviewed—but he is the film's villain. After taking office he turned sharply to the left and, much to America's dismay, out-Jaganed Jagan, nationalizing the bulk of Guyana's industries. As Guyana became the second-poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, the PNC retained its power by rigging elections until the 1992 presidential race, when the Carter Center arrived in Georgetown as monitors—and Cheddi Jagan ended Burnham's run.

Janet Jagan ran for office after her husband died of a heart attack, but the results were so disputed her victory was not declared until days after the election. The "eureka" moment of victory was thus never quite there for Wasserman's camera to capture; after winning Jagan heads home to rest. Still, her level-headed triumph is the crescendo of the film. Her presidency may have been short-lived—because of health problems, she stepped down after twenty months—but it was the climax of Janet Rosenberg's transformation into Janet Jagan.

Such is the plot of *Thunder in Guyana*—and it is hardly impartial. In fact, there were gaffes on both sides of the political fence: Afro- and Indo-Guyanese parties relentlessly used their respective realms of influence—the public-service sector and the agricultural sector—to sabotage each other's agendas. And while Burnham was indeed a corrupt dictator, he is not Guyana's principal villain. That dubious honor goes to race itself: a synthetic system of biases that Guyanese and Western politicians consciously milked, engaging in what Cheddi Jagan, in his book *Forbidden Freedom*, called "the familiar imperialist game of divide and rule." Professor Ralph Premdas concludes his study of Guyana with a grim diagnosis: The country suffered—and still suffers—from "ethnically inspired collective insanity."

It is a surreal plot twist that at the crux of this racial "insanity" sits a woman who confounds race altogether. Who—what—was Janet Jagan? To the Western media she was a dangerous Jew misidentified by journalists as a relative of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. To Burnham she was a "stupid American" (he allegedly addressed her as such during sessions of Parliament). To many Indo-Guyanese she was simply white: "They used to call me a blue-eyed bouchie," Jagan recalls ("bouchie" is a brother's wife; "brother," here, is Cheddi). Rolling her eyes, Jagan shrugs. "I'm not even blue-eyed."

It's one of the few moments in the film where Jagan addresses her racial identity; another is prompted by an Associated Press reporter who directly inquires about it. Jagan replies, "I don't know if people see white when they look at me—except, you know, the diehard politicians. But maybe I am living in a dream world.... I don't feel anything like being a minority." She pauses and adds that perhaps her identification with the underdog was a product of growing up Jewish in America.

It's a plausible explanation, as well as a familiar one. Janet Jagan is one in a long line of Jews—from 1920s-era musicians George Gershwin and Mezz Mezzrow to

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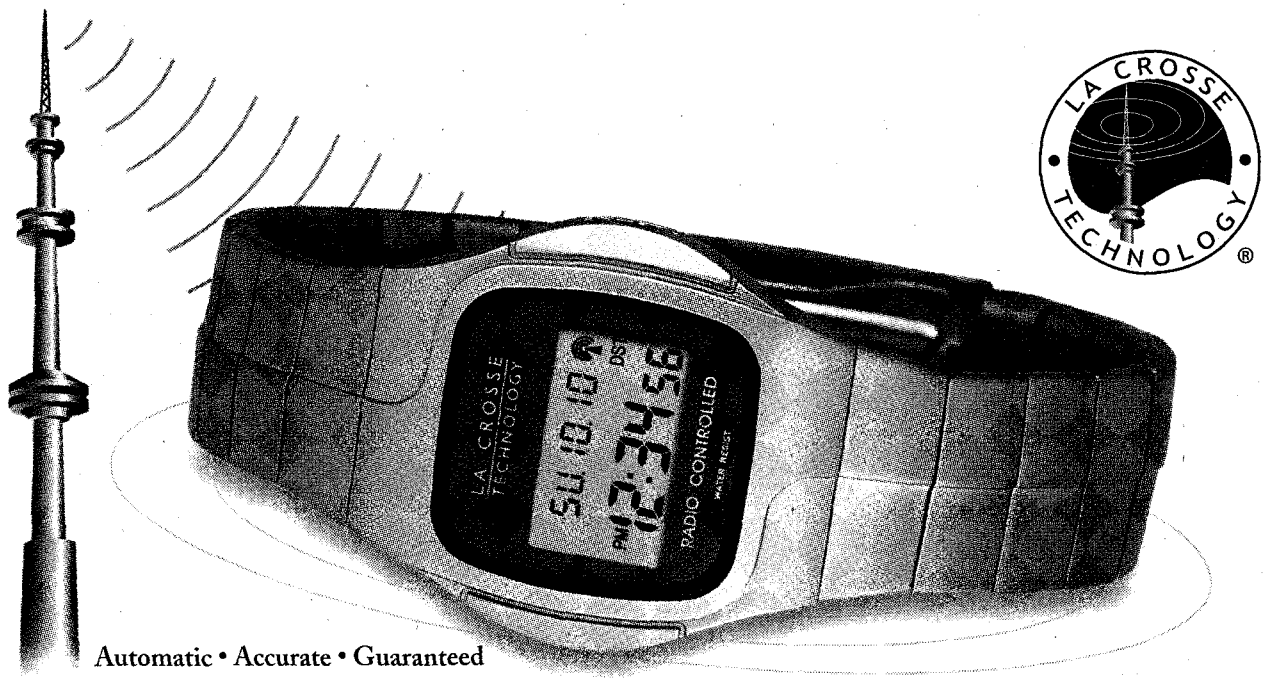

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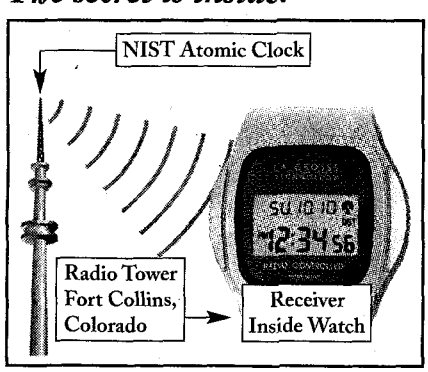

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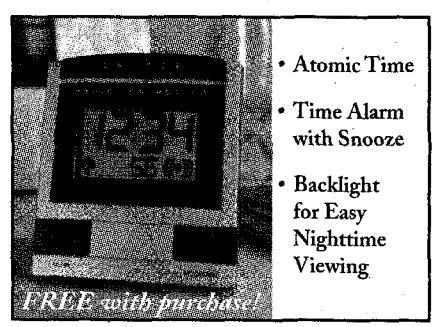

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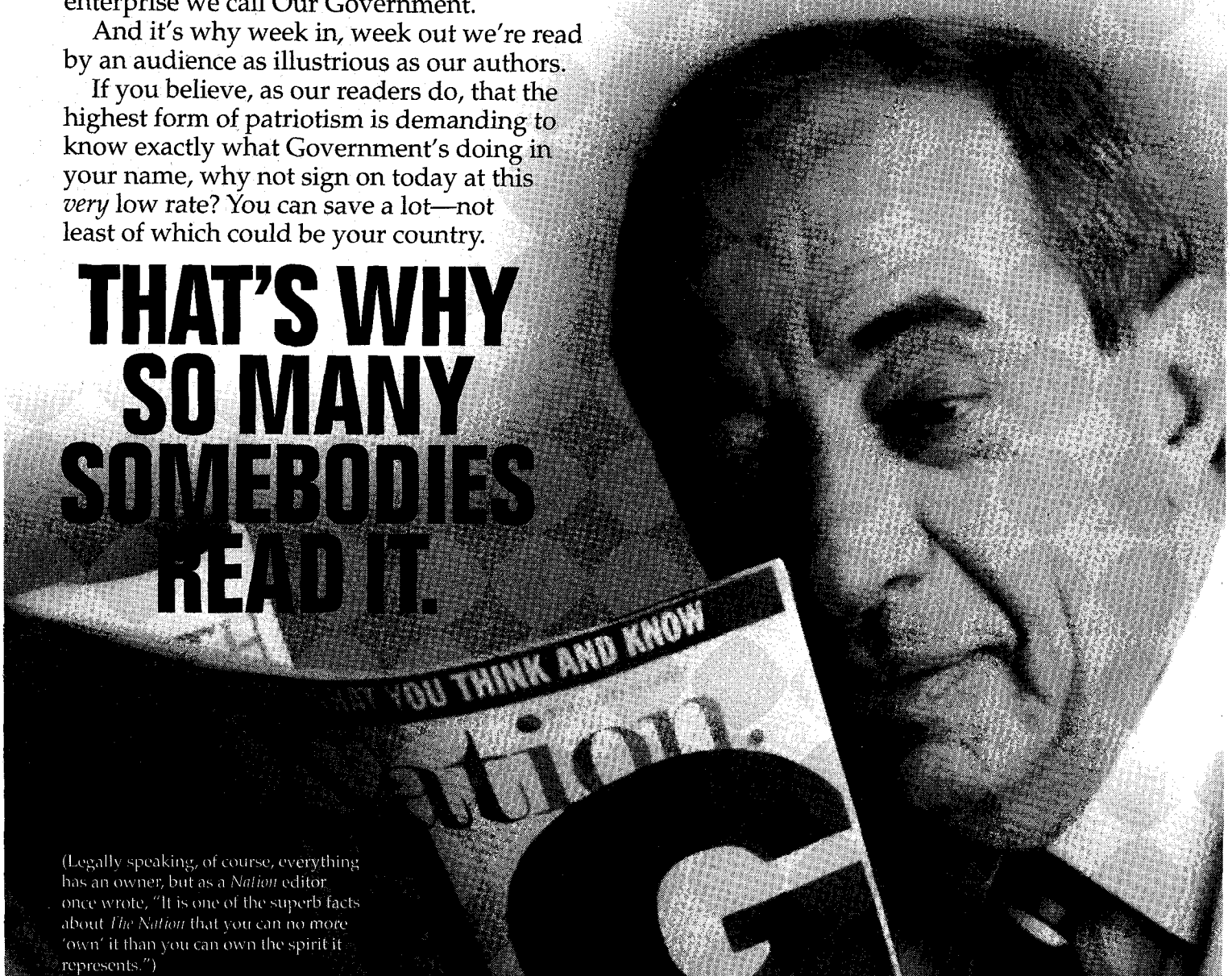

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civil rights martyrs Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman and hip-hop Hebrews the Beastie Boys—who have, in various degrees and contexts, identified cross-racially. How such crossover figures negotiate the conflicting facets of their identities—how, for instance, a Jewish-American woman feels about being, as daughter-in-law Nadine Jagan puts it, "more Guyanese than most Guyanese"—is a profound issue that *Thunder in Guyana* could have probed.

It doesn't, perhaps because Wasserman's interviews with her cousin, more informational than emotional, emphasize the public over the private, history over her story. We learn little about Janet and Cheddi's relationship, and only slightly more about Janet's rift with her Jewish family: "Unfortunately," states Jagan, speaking flatly of her father's death, "my husband and my father never met." Jagan seems uninterested in reflecting on the emotional dimension of her cross-identification—which alone could indicate how deep this identification runs. Analyzing one's identification with the "other" (as Mezzrow did in his memoir *Really the Blues*) means standing apart from that group; taking this identification for granted, by contrast, suggests a sense of peace with one's cultural crossover and, perhaps, with the inherently vexed nature of race and identity.

The film's only reading of Janet Jagan's racial identity comes from Nadine Jagan, who suggests a rich tension at the heart of *Thunder in Guyana*. "She fell in love with [Cheddi], and they had a common goal." Jagan's daughter-in-law shrugs. "That's all they saw."

The cruel irony of Janet Jagan's story is that her personal narrative and her public one—her story and Guyana's story—are at odds. Janet may have fallen in love with Cheddi, and from then on seen cause over color. But her beloved Guyana could never do the same; it evolved into a nation that privileged color over cause. In Janet's triumphant personal saga, politics trumps race; in Guyana's tragic one, race trumps politics. And though the latter saga is the more disquieting one, it is also, in our race-fixed world, the more universal and familiar one—and thus the easiest one to recount. To plumb the depths of Jagan's personal story is an altogether different coup, one that *Thunder in Guyana* comes tantalizingly close to achieving. ■

Dazed and Confused

SUZY HANSEN

SMASHED: Story of a Drunken Girlhood. By Koren Zailckas. Viking, 342 pp. $21.95.

Perhaps no cultural phenomenon has been as successful at demonizing alcohol as MTV's *The Real World*. Watch it sometime. You'll never want to drink again. The roommates—barely legal, scared, nervous and prone to idiotic exhibitionism—are abandoned in foreign cities, with lots of money and practically nothing to do. They live in close quarters with other men and women, some of whom they don't get along with, others with whom they want to sleep. They go out most nights and drink their faces off, dancing stupidly up against one another; when they trip home late at night, the mayhem continues. Someone inevitably says something racist, misogynistic or homophobic—or worse, pours out a personal sob story about why they're so fucked up. All-night, incoherent talks about everyone's respective "issues" ensue; couples vaguely attracted to each other fall into bed; others fight for no apparent reason. The next day, the roommates are lazy, depressed, gray-looking, slightly violent, filled with self-loathing, unable to remember the night's chaotic events (thank God they have it all on tape!) and incapable of accomplishing much. So they drink again. It's a silly train wreck of a show, and at some point, you realize these kids are just plain bored.

It all sounds a lot like college to me. Or, at least, a lot like college as portrayed in Koren Zailckas's memoir *Smashed: Story of a Drunken Girlhood*. In *Smashed* the scene of revelry and destruction is Syracuse University, a school that, because of its size, Greek system and paralyzingly cold weather, has long been a hotbed of binge drinking. Zailckas's memoir is the story of her own pathological debauchery; in college, she drinks about five nights a week to feel better about herself, to laugh comfortably at parties, to muster the courage to hook up with boys. Still, she is not an alcoholic; *Smashed* remains firmly outside of the addiction memoir genre, falling somewhere between the ugly coming-of-age territory of Mary Karr (Zailckas's mentor) and the frat-boy-and-violence landscape of memoirist Brad Land (author of *Goat*). It's a strange breed of memoir, one that hard-core, longtime alcoholics might sniff at, or that any young writer might disdain—especially given the fact that Zailckas received an advance of $150,000 for it at the innocent age of 23.

For sure, after all the other memoirs, the *Real World* episodes, the ominous magazine articles and Tom Wolfe's campus novel *I Am Charlotte Simmons*, Zailckas's portrayal of college-age women growing up and falling down sounds pretty familiar. But what makes Zailckas's book stand out is not that she drank but that—after some postcollege months of martini consumption in the frat-boy refuge of Manhattan's Upper East Side—she quit. It's not easy to say no to a beer at that age, when you're tremulously just out of college and floundering for a new life. And it's even harder in New York, where professional and personal activities revolve around bars and restaurants, "getting a drink" and "meeting for cocktails."

Smashed, written during Zailckas's initial months of sobriety, is considerably darker than my description of the sodden *Real World*–ers. In fact, it's a very somber book, written in a tone of earnest melodrama one would expect from a young person who wholeheartedly believes she's experienced a uniquely painful life. Her gravity will, no doubt, satisfy binge-drinker alarmists everywhere (and it's since been reported that her publishers are sending *Smashed* to politicians, too). But the joylessness of the book might also strike ordinary readers as slightly disingenuous. Is it possible that this woman had no fun at all in high school and college?

It's annoying to harp on a memoirist's age, but it's also hard not to. One cannot help but think that Zailckas, a few years later, wouldn't have spent four dramatic pages on pointless roommate quarrels or meditations on the way college serves to "categorize" its students. When she vaguely writes, "I am ashamed of my gnarled soul, which is something no surgeon can correct," you wonder, what's she talking about? She's a perfectly nice girl who, according to her memoir, has led a fairly uneventful life. Gnarled soul? But this sense of college as an inherently depressing place as well as

Suzy Hansen is an editor at The New York Observer.

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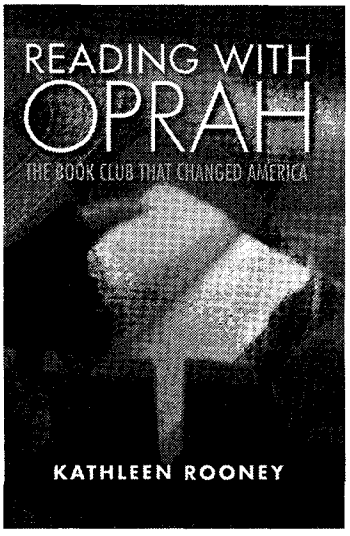

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this idea of her own badness, she will explain, was mostly due to alcohol.

The pain of growing up is often, in *Smashed*, due to alcohol. As is, in fact, the pain of *not* growing up. Zailckas believes that her alcohol consumption stunted her growth and that, emotionally, she remains a teen in a twentysomething's clothing. The thing is, Zailckas is young (24!). But she doesn't seem to know that. She's pretty hard on herself.

Yet the "gnarled soul" comment gets at two main themes—one convincing, the other troubling—of *Smashed*. The first is that, yes, drinking keeps college kids—if not emotionally stunted in the same way drugs and alcohol do for true addicts and alcoholics—disoriented, incurious and unhealthy, trapped in their own adolescent self-loathing. In Zailckas's full telling of her high school to college years, the normal, miserable evolution from child to adult feels even uglier in binge-drinking's distorted, late-night haziness, and in its thick-headed, painful hangovers. (Not to mention what it does to romance; more on that later.) *Smashed* works as a memoir—both in its readability and its argument—because it successfully describes the author's own spiral into misery and self-obliteration.

The second shadowy theme of *Smashed* is that Zailckas, perhaps as a stand-in for many young women (she would certainly hope so), feels an almost incredible, and perhaps equally harmful, amount of shame about this behavior. "I fear some sliver of panic, sadness, or self-loathing will always stay with us," she writes in her introduction. Shame, not the joy of newfound sobriety, drives her storytelling more than anything else, and through that muddled lens, things like humor and perspective get lost too. But *Smashed*, for Zailckas, is first and foremost a purge.

The initial pages of *Smashed*, which cover Zailckas's childhood, unfurl slowly and predictably; the gritty, fast-paced stuff occurs once she gets to Syracuse. She describes totally normal behavior as a teenager: withdrawing from her family, dressing in baggy clothes, listening to Radiohead songs filled with self-loathing that mirrors her own. Again, that's the point of Zailckas's book: that teenage depression can make anyone vulnerable to the high of alcohol. But the childhood section also suggests some of the particular anxieties that girls, and girls alone, endure. At one point, discussing her preteen self, she describes getting ready for a party with her best friend: "We are trying to master what our mothers have taught us about looking 'put together.'" Zailckas, who thanks her mother in the introduction for alerting her to "women's issues," perceives that women are under some special sort of pressure, and that stress might have influenced her later alcohol abuse.

That idea, unfortunately, is never fully explored. In fact, it is unclear what drives Zailckas's depression and anger—that she's a girl? that she hates school?—and she doesn't really try to locate it, a problem that will resurface in the book when she erupts into irrational bursts of violent rage and sinks into depression. "Together, we are like war veterans," she writes of her college friend Elle. "We both feel horrifically wounded." (Why? Nothing has happened to them at that point.) "Tears start running down my cheeks during class lectures. My eyes water in the laundry room, on the treadmill, and during student-union screenings of slapstick comedies," she admits after she's firmly ensconced in the rhythms of college nightlife. Many of the scenes Zailckas describes resonate, especially with those of us who've had similar moments. What's frustrating about *Smashed* is her explanation. Is alcohol really the culprit? Or is it just the scariness of maturity? Is it possible these girls are just plain exhausted? Unlike her mentor, Mary Karr, or the writer Caroline Knapp (whose *Drinking: A Love Story* drew interesting connections between anorexia and alcoholism), Zailckas can't identify her sadness, or explain it, partly because she's still too close to how her ordeal *feels*.

When she joins a sorority, however, the idea that constant inebriation causes these women's unhappiness becomes gripping, partly because Zailckas tells her story so well. The women starve themselves by day and pig out drunk at night. They are always drinking, and they are always crying. The house feels like a big, swaying ship of unnecessary misery, forlorn prisoners howling from below the deck, ghosts of drunk girls past haunting the kitchens. Inevitably, the messiness of drunken insecurity and the nearby presence of guys collude to make this a house of horrors. Anyone who's ever blacked out will read Zailckas's descriptions of "the way the mind remembers forgetting" and shudder—not unlike the way you do the morning after a hard night's drinking, when a flash of your own stupid behavior suddenly mocks you in your memory. But when that happens and you know you've been with a man or woman the night before, the realization is something altogether different. Your body remembers things you do not.

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Date rape might have been a major subject of *Smashed*, yet Zailckas isn't quite sure that she was date-raped. The first time she wakes up beside a boy, when still a virgin, she doesn't remember the experience, though her body aches; she fears for what she might have done, or what might have happened to her. And the second time? Well, Zailckas, by that point, feels complicit in her world of drinkers, and we can't totally trust her memory of what happened. That's not to say she's an unreliable narrator, simply that by that point we're well aware of how often Zailckas blacks out, and shellshocked by her self-hatred and carelessness. Date rape, it should be said, is much more complicated than yes and no, especially when alcohol is involved. To her credit, Zailckas understands that. The scene unfolds with heartbreaking nuance. She thinks she remembers wanting to say no, but doesn't remember getting the words out. "Sorry about the whole sex thing," the guy says. Zailckas ultimately writes, "In its hangover, my body reminds me that I am at fault." But why did the guy apologize? She doesn't check herself here; surprisingly, she doesn't seem angry about it. Zailckas's shame has overwhelmed even her sensitivity to her "women's issues."

In many ways, *Smashed* feels like Zailckas's letter to herself: The memoir includes statistics on drinking and young women, she relates stories of drinking-related deaths, she blames advertising, she offers advice. She's bolstering her case to herself: *This happened, it's everywhere, you're OK, this is what you should do.* Yet with that one passage, in which she drops the issue of possible date rape in a few sentences, it's obvious that Zailckas's shame still clouds her perception of things. It has her so confused that she can't even recognize the difference between her mistakes and the possibility of someone else's. She can't discern what isn't the fault of alcohol, because for her alcohol is the reason for everything. And, again, she feels compelled to apologize for drinking too much. It's that impulse to be sorry, more than anything else she notes in her book about women and drinking, that strikes me as disturbingly girlish.

When she moves to New York after college, Zailckas has one of those powerful moments in which she wishes she were someone else. Or, perhaps, that she wants to grow up already, and shed the self-destructive sloppiness of her college years. "I do want a good life," she writes. "More than anything, I want to be one of those people I see at sundown on weekdays. I want to be as laughing as the women who window shop with their girlfriends after the boutiques have lowered their steel security gates, or as lovely as the women who curl their hands into their lovers' coat pockets, or as self-possessed as the women who lope behind their sprightly black Labradors." What's impressive about Zailckas as a writer is that, at times, she can evoke such sudden emotion out of these quiet observations.

And what's impressive about Zailckas as a young woman is not necessarily that she quit drinking at 23—though good for her. It's that she had the wisdom to realize that unhappiness wasn't something that happened to her, but rather something of her own making, and that she needed to eliminate whatever it was that was preventing her from having the life she wanted. In that sense, *Smashed*, despite its marketing as a cautionary tale for would-be binge-drinkers, is a typical coming-of-age memoir, where growing up is about letting go of whatever stupid, unnecessary thing keeps us down.

Unfortunately, life is like that—there will be many more stupid things to let go of down the road. Shame, for Zailckas at least, might be one of them. ■

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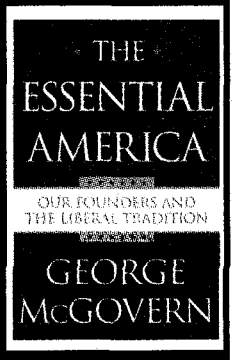
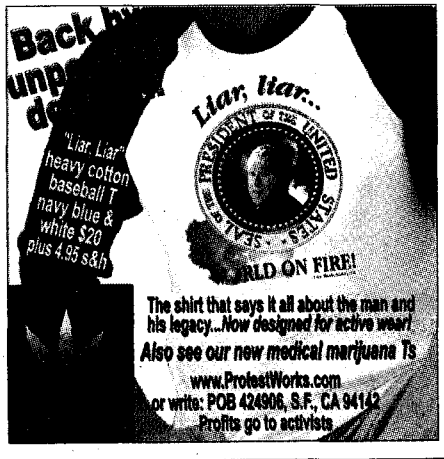


Published by Simon and Schuster in 2004. 165 pages; $20.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When Seeing Was Believing

ARTHUR C. DANTO

THE REFORMATION OF THE IMAGE. By Joseph Leo Koerner. Chicago. 464 pp. $48.

In Hegel's formidable system of aesthetics, fine art fulfills its highest calling when "it has placed itself in the same sphere as religion and philosophy." Philosophy, religion and fine art are modes of what Hegel called Absolute Spirit, by which he meant that each in its different way is capable of expressing "the deepest interests of mankind, and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit." Despite his exalted view of art, Hegel felt that humankind had begun to outgrow it, and that it no longer provided "that satisfaction of spiritual needs which earlier ages and nations sought in it." Thus he spoke grandly of the End of Art, which meant, in the long history of antagonism between philosophy and art, that a philosopher had once again found a way of putting art out of the way. Plato notoriously consigned art to the realm of shadows and illusions, and found no place for artists in the ideal society. Hegel, for his part, thought art belonged in the museum, where it would do no harm and function as an object for historical research. Since it is limited to the senses, Hegel argued, art is philosophy's inferior when it comes to addressing the ultimate issues of being.

Much the same iconophobia inflected religion's attitude toward art in the West, beginning with the Second Commandment, which assumes that we are unable to visualize things without worshiping the images. It was the genius of Catholicism to find a way of incorporating the impulse to visualize by monopolizing the production and use of images, which then made images natural targets for that religion's critics. Iconoclasm—literally, the destruction of images—was a natural first impulse of church reform. "Church pictures," Joseph Leo Koerner writes, "were accused of exciting idolatry, breaking the biblical law against graven images and ignoring the early Christian martyrs' repudiation of pagan effigies." Koerner's subject, in this remarkable study, is "the reformation of the image"—how the artists of the Reformation, working closely with its thinkers, managed to reconfigure the devotional image to suit the needs of their religion, when the initial impulse was simply to cleanse the churches of painting and sculpture. They did this by effectively turning religious images into "visual equivalents of confessional texts." The history of art in sixteenth-century Germany could have become "a story of the image's annihilation." Instead it became the story of the image's transformation into something that did exactly what Hegel prescribed for art "in its highest vocation," namely to situate art in "the same sphere as religion and philosophy." Far from being limited to the senses, the art of the Reformation probed the deepest questions of human life. The art was intended to be read, one might say, rather than merely looked at or worshiped. It showed what the reformers, and most particularly Martin Luther, said. It mirrored devotional practice.

Koerner concentrates on two Reformation altarpieces. One is by Lucas Cranach the Elder in Wittenberg, which commemorates and portrays Luther twice, as he would still have been remembered by the congregation that worshiped in his church. The other is Heinrich Göding's Mühlberg Altarpiece of 1568. Both of these extraordinary works were unknown to me, as I dare say they will be to most readers of this book. I knew of Cranach, but mostly from his earlier paintings of luminous undulating goddesses, whose luscious bodies are revealed through diaphanous garments fluttering against black Mannerist backgrounds. These hardly prepared me for a work as complex as his Wittenberg Altarpiece, let alone the Mühlberg Altarpiece, one of the most amazing works I have ever encountered. It is amazing because it manages to be art, philosophy and religion all at once. It fuses verbal and pictorial meaning in such a way that members of the congregation would be able to grasp, in a single visual experience, what they needed to know in order to see what they believed and understand what they saw.

Reading Koerner's singular and compelling analyses, I felt that I could catch something of the atmosphere that Hegel must have breathed, sitting in the Lutheran church interiors of his native Saxony two and a half centuries later. It was as if that powerful metaphysician had somehow transformed that atmosphere into a specu-

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lative system in which art, philosophy and religion coexist in a unity as intricate as that of the Trinity. In a way, the Reformation altarpiece could be seen as the end of art, just as Hegel claimed. But in another way it is the beginning of art as we know it today, less an occasion for aesthetic delectation than of philosophical interpretation and understanding. Koerner writes that Hegel's was the first aesthetic theory to be "based on meanings rather than forms." But that is what the "reformation of the image" amounted to in practice.

Let us focus on the predella of Lucas Cranach's altarpiece. A predella is a picture, or set of pictures, that rests on the altar itself and supports the altarpiece. It mediates, so to speak, between the physical space of the church and the pictorial space in which the persons of the altarpiece are seen. In Cranach's case, the predella is a long rectangle that has the shape of a sepulcher, in which Luther is depicted at the right, preaching across a wide space to the congregation seated at the left. In the empty space between preacher and congregants there is an image of Christ crucified. Christ's agony on the cross is the subject of the sermon, and Cranach has made this visible. But he has also made visible the fact that the Crucifixion is the meaning of the service, that it stands in the space in which the religion is practiced. This is not merely a vision shared by Luther and his congregants, for the Crucifixion is shown casting a shadow on the church floor, as if it were real. This situates it both in the hearts of the faithful and in the physical space they occupy. It relates the congregation to the altar and to the ritual mysteries that transpire there, as well as to the scenes depicted in the altarpiece itself, preeminently the Last Supper, in which Christ reveals that the bread and wine are his body and blood, and that he and his followers are one substance, as celebrated in the mass. In a stunning analysis of the painting, Koerner powerfully illuminates the complex of beliefs—theological, social and political—defining the religious practices that evolved through Luther's teaching.

The predella of Heinrich Göding's Mühlberg Altarpiece is, if anything, even more intricate. Seated before it, the congregation was able to see portraits, on either side, of the two patrons who commissioned the altarpiece. The predella itself shows them taking communion in front of the same altarpiece on which the predella rests. Since the predella shows the very altarpiece on which it rests, it shows itself in the picture. In this picture within the picture, there is therefore another picture of the predella, and within that yet another, in a diminishing series that in principle extends to infinity. By the time the Mühlberg Altarpiece was completed, Göding's patrons had died. Yet the predella shows them in the same posture, partaking of the host over and over again, throughout eternity. It is as if the scene is reflected, re-reflected and re-re-reflected again and again, in what art historians call a *mise en abyme*—a kind of infinite regression in which a picture contains a picture of itself, which in turn contains a picture of itself. The most familiar example of this is the Quaker Oats box that shows a picture of a man holding a box of Quaker Oats with a picture of himself holding the same box, with a picture of himself holding the box, and so on forever. By depicting the pious couple in eternal communion with Jesus, The Mühlberg predella implies that those who take communion have already entered eternity. Nietzsche developed the idea of an Eternal Recurrence, which he claimed to be the most scientific of hypotheses. He believed that it would have an impact even greater than the doctrine of the soul's immortality. Through repeating images of itself, the Mühlberg predella renders this highly abstract concept in strikingly visual terms.

The Reformation of the Image is the most exciting book of art history I have read since Hans Belting's magisterial 1993 study of religious icons in European culture, *Likeness and Presence*. Both books not only introduce us to works of art of a kind with which we are likely to be unfamiliar but to ways of relating to art that are very different from those we take for granted. In both cases, the importance of the art in question does not depend on aesthetic merit. The devotional image, as Belting described it, was supposed to perform miracles if prayed to in the right way, not to gratify the eye. Only with the Renaissance did pictorial art make aesthetic gratification its central aim. The Reformation altarpiece found ways of picturing invisible things, the understanding of which was believed to be essential to salvation. Both authors draw liberally on philosophy to clarify the way these works functioned in venues very different from the museum and the art gallery. At the same time, these forgotten or little-known works reveal dimensions of artistic achievement that widen our understanding of art well beyond aesthetic contemplation.

With *The Reformation of the Image*, Joseph Leo Koerner has completed a three-volume study of German art that began with his earlier study of Caspar David Friedrich.

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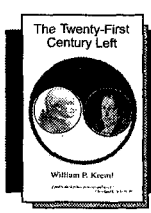

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Indeed, this volume opens with Friedrich's 1807–08 painting, *The Cross in the Mountains*, which, like Cranach's Wittenberg Altarpiece, leaves it unclear whether there is an actual crucifixion in the mountains or whether it is a vision of the Crucifixion in a wild landscape. The volume ends with an 1810 sketch by Friedrich of a ruined choir, a powerfully evocative Romantic image. Koerner interprets Friedrich's drawing as "an allegory of how art arises from the ruins of religion." What he has accomplished in this marvelous book is to bring that religion to life again, and in the process make vivid the art that emerged from the critique of images that launched the Reformation. ■

FILMS

Beat the Devil

STUART KLAWANS

CONSTANTINE

About two-thirds of the speaking characters in *Constantine* are either demons or angels. The paraphernalia of exorcism abound, and Keanu Reeves wears a sick and weary look, like someone whose adventure has not been excellent. When I left the screening, my soul cried for succor. I hurried toward Congregation Anshe Tsurres and my spiritual adviser, Rabbi Simcha Feffeferman.

"Rabbi," I cried, bursting into his study, then halted on the threshold in confusion. The low, dim space was crammed with leotard-clad women, so many that they rubbed against the sloping spines on the bookshelves and pressed the rabbi to his desk. Each wore around her wrist a thread that was as crimson as her perfect manicure. In the sudden hush, I heard steam pipes. Then, from the desk, came the familiar hoarse voice: "You don't write, you don't call, a fax you don't send. At least you could knock."

Stammering apologies, I began to back away; but the rabbi held me in place by the crook of a finger, saying, "So, we were finished today anyway, yes? Go, be well." The visitors, obedient, lifted from the carpet a heavy burden of Prada and filed past me, trailing the varied odors of Saks.

"What?" I said when the last had gone.

The rabbi shrugged. "Kabbalists. You think the mortgage pays itself? Listen, better you should close the door and explain what's the aggravation."

"I have just seen a movie," I said, "*Constantine*, about Keanu Reeves's struggle for faith. He chain-smokes and coughs up blood and gets photographed as if in appalling fluorescent light, and why? Because he spends all his time punching demons in the face and sending them back to hell."

"And from this he makes a living?"

"No, it's not clear how he gets his money. He occupies about 50,000 square feet of prime real estate in downtown Los Angeles—an abandoned bowling alley, with a retro Sam Spade office-studio on the second floor—and he can afford to keep his own car and driver, but a job? No."

"And this makes him unhappy?"

"He's unhappy because he's doomed. When he was a teenager, he committed suicide and then was resuscitated. And because the experience taught him that all the scary parts of Catholic doctrine are true, he knows that the next time he dies, he'll go to hell forever. Keanu has seen the place—it looks like Century City viewed from the freeway, only all busted up and red—and he doesn't like it. So he goes around fighting creepy demonic tempters, in the hope that good works will buy him into God's grace."

The rabbi frowned, but only because he was now standing on tiptoe before a bookcase, trying to push a paperback copy of *The Time Out Guide to Kabbalah* into concealment on the third shelf. "Good works, grace. From this, I don't know."

"Well, let me tell you, it's a losing proposition. The angel Gabriel, who in this case is Tilda Swinton dressed in a suit and tie, tells Keanu that he won't get into heaven unless he stops being selfish and learns to serve others."

"Ah!" the rabbi grunted, plopping into his chair. "*Topper*. You remember—Cary Grant and Constance Bennett die and can't go to heaven because they never did anything good. So they have to haunt Roland Young and make him happy. Not a great movie, but there's this joke about his wife's underpants—"

"Please, I beg you. I need you to help me understand this movie. The sorrowful LA gumshoe who has seen too much is no longer uncovering the schemes of licentious tycoons, or even of sci-fi companies with interstellar operations. No more social corruption. He now confronts pure evil, which is simultaneously personal and cosmic. That's why, when Keanu is approached for help by a devoutly Catholic police detective, Rachel Weisz—"

"How am I supposed to understand something like this? Rachel Weisz is Catholic like I am."

"Just because she's got that name—"

"And face. You need I should tie a red thread on her wrist?"

"She's *playing* a Catholic! The same way she played the skirt role in *The Mummy*, I might add. A police detective, sure, but for the whole last reel, she's pretty much supine, while the ultimate battle is fought over, around and in her inert body. And yet—did I tell you?—she gets to visit the infernal Century City, too, so she can prove to the audience that she's a true soulmate of Keanu."

"Rachel *Weisz*?" the rabbi said.

He lifted his palms, as if this improbability had freighted the atmosphere and he had to guess by how many ounces. Then he rose and shuffled to the dimmest corner of the study, where he creakily lifted a box from a low shelf and brought it back to his desk. It was a Ouija board.

"This," I said, "is idolatry."

"And *this*," he said, "is giving me a headache, the way you're banging me a tea kettle over *Constantine*. Have I seen this movie? No. Do I know from you what it's about? No. So now, before the migraine starts, we're going to get some answers. Here, put your finger."

I protested; but the rabbi grabbed me by the wrists and pulled my fingertips onto the plaquette. He added his own. We held our breath. We heard steam pipes.

After a minute, I said, "The camera angles—"

"Shh! Do you feel it?"

I didn't. Then the plaquette jumped under our fingers. It clacked onto the board, remained still for a second, and then began hopping faster and faster in a syncopated staccato.

"What's going on?" I asked.

"Eleanor," said the rabbi.

"What?"

"Eleanor Powell. Wonderful talents she had. By me, she's always the first to visit. But we need someone for *you*, boychik. Eleanor! Listen, dollie, young Klawans here needs advice about a movie. A *new* movie. You know anybody?"

The plaquette rattled out a coda and stopped cold. Nothing. I waited now, with

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real anticipation, and at last felt the plaquette glide toward the crescent of letters. In rapid succession, it spelled out WE WANT POMES OF SILENCE.

"Yow," I said. "I think we pulled in James Merrill."

"Have I met him?" the rabbi asked.

KEENING MY DEARS WE CRY FOR KEANU—

OUR EYES ADORE BUT THE EARS DON'T WANT TO

"You have now," I said. "Mr. Merrill? A great admirer, and I'm sure our feelings about Keanu are not wholly dissimilar, but if I might discuss this movie with someone more, more—"

I FLY UP YRS

The plaquette wrenched to a halt. "I didn't mean to insult him," I said.

The rabbi shrugged. "More than he can say about you."

But it seemed that the invective had only begun. The plaquette started to move again, with a new brusqueness. It had bustled its way through "fathead dope sap sucker" before I realized a fresh force had taken charge.

"Pauline," I said. "Long time."

"Well anyhow you wait around thinking they can't drain all the fun out and then when you get to it you find it's like a used-up winesack just a big limp empty shaggy bladder about as attractive too."

"This is someone you know?" the rabbi said.

"Pauline, are you talking about the afterlife now, or *Constantine*?"

"He had that loose goofy pleasure in himself a mind as comfortably floppy as the hair over his face that's what made him so attractive at first not just the teenage Gary Cooper body or the Sabu eyes and even when they made him an action star in *Speed* he remained the careless one Dennis Hopper seemed to do all the worrying Keanu could slack off while defusing a bomb but then Bertolucci had to go and turn him into a holy man and worse was to come *The Matrix*."

"Even though I despised the whole trilogy, I thought Keanu had some nicely underplayed comic moments in the first picture."

"Well he's no Brendan Fraser when you see Fraser underplay it's a choice Keanu has no alternative that's why he got into trouble when he got stuck being a cyber god by the end of *Matrix Revolutions* he was blind and bloodied and ready to sacrifice himself for the sins of the world if you can believe that and that's where he picks up in *Constantine* still long and lithe but the face is hangdog now he mumbles to himself and squints at his cigarette smoke as he performs an exorcism for a Mexican family who could sue for defamation on behalf of their whole country."

"Let's not get into that, or the fact that the one black man in the film, Djimon Hounsou, is cast as a witch doctor, or the suggestion that the minions of evil tend to be a little limp-wristed. Keanu is the only character, Weisz included, who isn't squashed down to an ethnic or gender stereotype, and so, despite his psychic troubles, he's the only one who seems normal. Makes me glad that *Constantine* doesn't have any Jewish characters."

"She's Jewish, this Pauline?" the rabbi asked.

"You see the Brentwood religiosity in *Constantine* and you understand what Mel Gibson was making *The Passion of the Christ* against well that and the Jews he can't distinguish anyhow a good director can get away with a little stereotyping it's like a little salt but the director of this one Francis Lawrence throws in the whole box him and his screenwriters Kevin Brodbin and Frank Cappello they're counting on the audience to want only known quantities a Rachel Weisz who's still courting the Mummy a Keanu who's still Neo from *The Matrix* only crossed with Humphrey Bogart a visual style full of forced closeups and dizzy perspectives so it's equally recognizable as film noir and comic book a booming score that's like *Carmina Burana* heard through a cough syrup hangover the only novelty proposed is the special effects and that offer has become pretty old hat."

"Of course I agree with you. What bothers me most, though, is the hedged Manicheism. *Constantine* preaches that humans are mere pieces on a game board, and that God and Satan are the evenly matched players. I don't know what's worse, the way the movie abandons its conceit at the end and tilts toward the standard hosannas, or the way it implies that our lives here don't really matter, except if we give up smoking."

"Matter I'll tell you what matters you die and they turn you into Molly Bloom how's that for indignity."

But she was cut short. The rabbi, his face even more pale than usual, had lifted his fingers from the plaquette and was walking toward the bookshelf. He dragged from it *The Time Out Guide to Kabbalah* and threw it into the trash. "This is what my students want from the movies now? No. Better the bank should foreclose."

"Congratulations, rabbi. You're doing the honorable thing."

"And you, Mr. Film Critic? What have you pulled out of this spiritual hooey that's maybe a little honorable?"

"Me?" I said. "Notice that not once have I talked about Bush." ■

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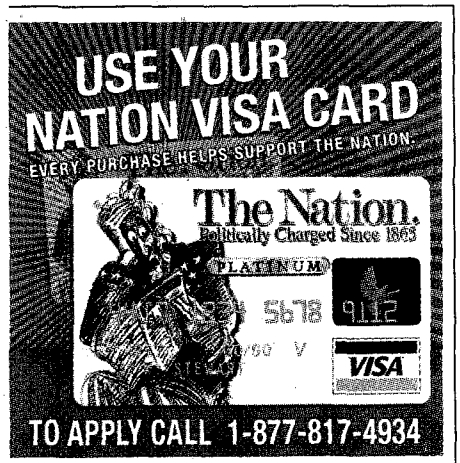

When drafting your will, please consider making a bequest to The Nation Institute.

For information write: Executive Director, The Nation Institute, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003; (212) 209-5400.

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While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics.*

APARTMENT-MATE WANTED

POLITICALLY ACTIVE SENIOR CITIZEN looking for apartment-mate to share large two-bedroom apartment in Montclair, New Jersey. Reply to Nation Box 397, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

RETIRED LABOR ORGANIZER, 74, looking to move in and share NYC Greenwich Village apartment and expenses with mature woman. Call Max (212) 929-5671.

BLOGS/WEB

OUTSIDE THE BOX! Secular, spiritual blogs, books. FREE download e-zine, e-book. Comments invited. www.karlroebling.com.

WANTED: THINKERS. Reliable website host and domain-name registrar seeks thinking customers. Learn more at www.pair.com.

THE REAL DEAL? Untouched by the Carlyle Group, Halliburton, Bechtel, White House, House of Bush and House of Saud. Straightforward talk at the independent, Washington, DC–based, WWW.SAUDIPOLITICS.COM.

CRIME POLICY ONLINE NEWSLETTER, focused on process in Washington, biweekly when Congress in session. Check website: www.crimeletter.net.

CELEBRATING JUNIOR'S FAILURES, foibles and miscalculations with song parodies and rhymed verse at www.political-boondoggles.com.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT: progressive commentary on current issues in US culture and politics. www.rogerconway.com.

www.oldtownreview.com: *"If this is indeed the path one chooses, let's at least get it out in the open."*

DON'T MOURN, ORGANIZE. Daily blog by *Nation* writer dedicated to winning back America. Progressive news and commentary. www.boldprint.net.

BOOKLETS

PROOF JESUS FICTIONAL. Scholarly booklet conclusively proves Flavius Josephus (Romans) created fictional Jesus, authored gospels. Amazing but absolutely incontrovertible! $10: Abelard, Box 5652-A, Kent, WA 98064. (details, SASE).

BOOKS

STAY IN TOUCH WITH CUBA—PEX, importing and selling Cuban cultural products in the United States since 1989. Books, magazines, CDs, videos and more. 1-888-458-CUBA or www.pexstore.com.

LIKE FRANKEN? MAHER? ROONEY? Check J. Danton Smith's *Memoirs of a Sleepless Mind* on Amazon.com.

CHIROPRACTOR

DR. VITTORIA REPETTO, CHIROPRACTOR. Applied kinesiologist, manipulation, muscle-balancing, organ energy, cranial, sacral and acu-point work. One-hour sessions. (212) 431-3724, www.drvittoriarepetto.meta-ehealth.com.

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GET THE EDGE! As progressive as your politics…marketing, sales, human resources: www.TheAddedEdge.com. Catalytic Coaching: www.AddedEdge.com.

COUNSELING

CHICAGO PSYCHOTHERAPIST. Treats depression, anxiety, relationship problems, etc. Specializes in concerns of artists and academics. *Sliding scale, insurance. Deborah Hellerstein,* LCSW, (312) 409-9516.

DONATIONS

WANT TO REALLY CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR ALMA MATER? Buy a class *The Nation* for a semester. If you know a professor who would like to offer free semester-length student subscriptions to her/his students, we'll offer you 12 or 16 weeks at the lowest prices we charge anywhere. For information write: Classroom Education Program, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS: Civil rights, politics, labor, suffrage, cities and towns. Professional quality. Wide selection. www.historyimage.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

RETIRED ACADEMIC, 72, seeks woman possessing low expectations of us summering on the Riviera, wintering in Palm Springs, dining downstairs at Chez Panisse or being invited in the next four year to the White House. San Francisco Bay Area only, please respond to *The Nation* Box 405, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

THE RIGHT STUFF: Date fellow graduates and faculty of the Ivies, Seven Sisters, Stanford, UCB, University of Chicago, Northwestern and others. More than 4,000 members. See www.rightstuffdating.com, (800) 988-5288.

EROTIC ADULT PHONE CONVERSATION with sensual, intelligent women. Any topic welcome! VISA/MC/AMEX. Call (888) 495-8255.

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal, confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

GREENSINGLES.COM—Free photo ads for progressive singles in the environmental, vegetarian and animal rights communities. Searchable listings for friendship, dating, marriage. Since 1985. www.GreenSingles.com

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

MERCHANDISE

WAR IS NOT PRO-LIFE! Union-made bumper sticker. Car magnets. Switch your moving message whenever. www.CommonSenseMom.com.

DOGPATCH: THE UNCOMFORTABLY LIBERAL CD! Entertainment for the New American Plantation! Come celebrate the circular swirl of American culcha! www.cdbaby.com/cd/christopherdfee or www.cafepress.com/mightyfee. "I am fighting for the work of the Lord." —Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf.*

SUPPORT *THE NATION* AND OUR NATION! Shop online at www.thenationmart.com and exercise subtle and not-so-subtle dissent. Great gifts (prices on some items now reduced).

CUSTOM BUMPER STICKERS 2-C on white, 3/$12.95, 10/$29.95. Quantity pricing available. Signsnow366@signs-now.com.

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ORGANIZATIONS

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?—The American Political Crisis Express your viewpoint with Boston West Suburban *Nation* Discussion Group, first meeting Sunday, January 16, 1:30–3 PM, First Parish UU Church, Harrington Room, 50 Church Street, Waltham, MA 02452. Hans Rosdolsky, (781) 893-2186, hgrosdol@verizon.net.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming. First meeting is Monday, February 14, 7 PM, Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE (just off I-85 at the North Druid Hills exit). Mel Rechtman (404) 325-8435, rechtman@bellsouth.net.

TUCSON, AZ, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING. Contact Dave at (520) 885-4767.

DENTON (CORINTH), TX *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming. Contact John at (940) 498-4485 or john2348@charter.net for more information.

WILLOW SPRINGS, NC, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP forming. E-mail Mollie Belcher at Mjb1009@msn.com for more information.

JOIN THE NEW CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP! Contact Jim Hurley at (434) 973-4807.

GAINESVILLE, FL, "THE NATION IS US" discussion group forming. Connect to Lewwelge2@aol.com or (904) 398-2335.

NEW SAN FRANCISCO *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP to meet regularly on Nob Hill. Please contact George Schroeder via e-mail for more information: georges1202@comcast.net.

THE *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP of the Inland Northwest is forming in the Cheney/Spokane area of eastern Washington. For information contact Gil Murray. Tel: (509) 235-1574; e-mail murraygil@aol.com.

ATTENTION BENELUX *NATION* READERS! Want your own *Nation* discussion group? Group to meet in Hasselt (Limburg), Belgium. For further information e-mail associates@thenation.com or write The Nation Associates, *The Nation*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, USA.

POLICY

END THE DRUG WAR. See www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org, www.DrugWarFacts.org, www.DRCNet.org, www.MedicalMJ.org, www.DrugSense.org, www.AddictInTheFamily.org.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

WEB EDITOR WANTED. *The Nation* seeks a full-time web editor with progressive politics, boundless energy and a strong commitment to help amplify the influence and scope of the magazine's online presence. The web editor will work closely with magazine editors as well as business staffers in developing the site. Major responsibilities include planning, creating and implementing new *Nation* online features; conceiving and executing the creation of online enhancements to articles originating from the print magazine; assisting in outreach to other online media; coordinating breaking online news coverage; and editing original *Nation* online articles. Ideal candidate has at least three years' experience working at a political website; closely follows the news media—print, broadcast and online—has broad familiarity with the progressive community; keeps abreast of alternative and youth culture; works well with a wide array of individuals, internal departments and outside organizations; and is comfortable with very tight deadline pressure. Familiarity with HTML, online production and content management a plus. Applicant must work in *The Nation*'s New York City office. Position offers generous benefits and a congenial work atmosphere. *The Nation* is an equal opportunity employer; people of color and other minorities strongly encouraged to apply. E-mail résumé, cover letter and salary requirements to: webjob@thenation.com. No calls, please.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

SEIU/DISTRICT 1199. Work for real change now, where it matters—Ohio! Want to make real changes in the lives of working people? Want to take back the most politically pivotal state in the nation? Senior researcher needed for large-scale organizing campaigns in Ohio with dynamic, growing healthcare union. Requires analytical and strategic mind, vision and drive. See www.seiu1199.org/ourlocal/jobs.cfm?jobID=619.

NATION STUDENT OUTREACH: Attention student activists! If you're involved in organizing a progressive event, lecture or film festival on your campus or in your community and would like to distribute copies of *The Nation*, please let us know by calling (212) 209-5416.

POSITIONS DESIRED

PART OR FULL-TIME public relations work sought by former wire-service workplace columnist. (305) 205-8281.

TALK-SHOW HOST, good liberal, seeking gig. Medium and major market experience. Lawyer, sociology professor. Audition CD: (515) 279-2244.

LAWYER/ACTIVIST, experienced nonprofit executive, persuasive writer. Seeking public policy work. (800) 370-4617. stadtholder@yahoo.com.

PSYCHIATRY

PSYCHIATRIST AND THERAPIST, Upper East Side Manhattan. Treatment for depression, anxiety, parenting and psychosomatic symptoms. Sliding scale. Many years' clinical and teaching experience. Telephone contact is assured prior to appointment. (212) 831-1050.

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SAN FRANCISCO PSYCHOTHERAPIST treats depression, relationship issues, anxiety, crises. Consultation available. Sliding scale. Paula Holt, LCSW, (415) 289-6990.

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DC/MD/VA PYCHOLOGIST, progressive approaches, thirty-four years' experience, aac-counselingassociates.com, Sliding scale, (301) 229-0044.

NYC PSYCHOTHERAPIST, thirty years. All issues. Individuals/couples/families. Sliding scale. Judy Wenning, CSW Postmasters, (212) 932-0391.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

NEW YORK THERAPIST, twenty years' clinical and university-based experience. Separation and divorced parenting; divorced fathers. Individual, family and group. Bill Dineen, LCSW, (917) 566-4785.

STUCK? Try pragmatic psychoanalytic psychotherapy: Varying combinations of modern approaches. Perceptible results. Bill Gross. Masters in psychology and philosophy. $20 first session. UWS (212) 502-6653.

PUBLISHING

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK: Ivy House Publishing Group. All subjects considered for a free evaluation. Contact 5122 Bur Oak Circle, Dept. N, Raleigh, NC 27612. Phone: (800) 948-2786. E-mail: publisher@ivyhousebooks.com.

RADIO

To advertise your radio program or station here, call us at (212) 209-5400.

RADIO STORIES. *The Fourth Tower of Inverness*, *Ruby* and more! FREE catalogue & CD! (800) 662-3345 or info@zbs.org.

RADIONATION is currently aired on more than 90 public stations in the United States and Canada. For a full listing and other information, write RadioNation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

REAL ESTATE

SANTA FE. Progressive Realtor® seeks same in clients. Peter Kahn, Town & Ranch (800) 418-1221 x 171 or pkahn@keshi.com.

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VIDEO MAKER/COMPUTER/EDIT/PRODUCTION/MARKETING work at home justernest@cableone.net.

SPANISH STUDY

GUATEMALA: Study Spanish plus CLEP, Praxis preparation, internship, voluntary work, cheap tours. www.casaxelaju.com.

TRAVEL/TOURS

EXPLORE POLITICS, ECONOMY, CULTURE ABROAD through Reality Tours with Global Exchange. See ad in *The Nation*, page 33, www.globalexchange.org.

CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

Rates and Frequency Discounts: STANDARD $3.75/word, 15-word minimum = $56.25 for 1 - 3 insertions; PO Box, telephone numbers, web address count as two words.

Buy 4 - 9 runs, pay $3.40 per word
Buy 10 - 23 runs, pay $3.25 per word
Buy 24 - 46 runs, pay $2.95 per word
Buy 47 runs, pay $2.40 per word

Logos: We will print your logo and center the headline of your advertisement for an additional fee of $50/insertion B/W; $60 for color. Maximum size for a logo is 2 1/4″ wide by 1/2″ deep. EPS logo should accompany ad copy and payment.

Deadline: Tuesday, 3 PM, 10 days prior to Monday issue date.

Payment in US currency or major credit card must accompany order.

Enclosed is my check for $ _____ for _____ insertions at $ _____ / word rate.

"Personals" advertisers: Be sure to include $45 for Nation Box number/forwarding service.

For all ads please include your name, address and contact phone number with your ad. You can fax your classifieds to us at (212) 982-9000; e-mail leigh@thenation.com; call (212) 209-5414.

E-mail preferred. Attach ad, typewritten if possible.
The Nation, Classified Department, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003

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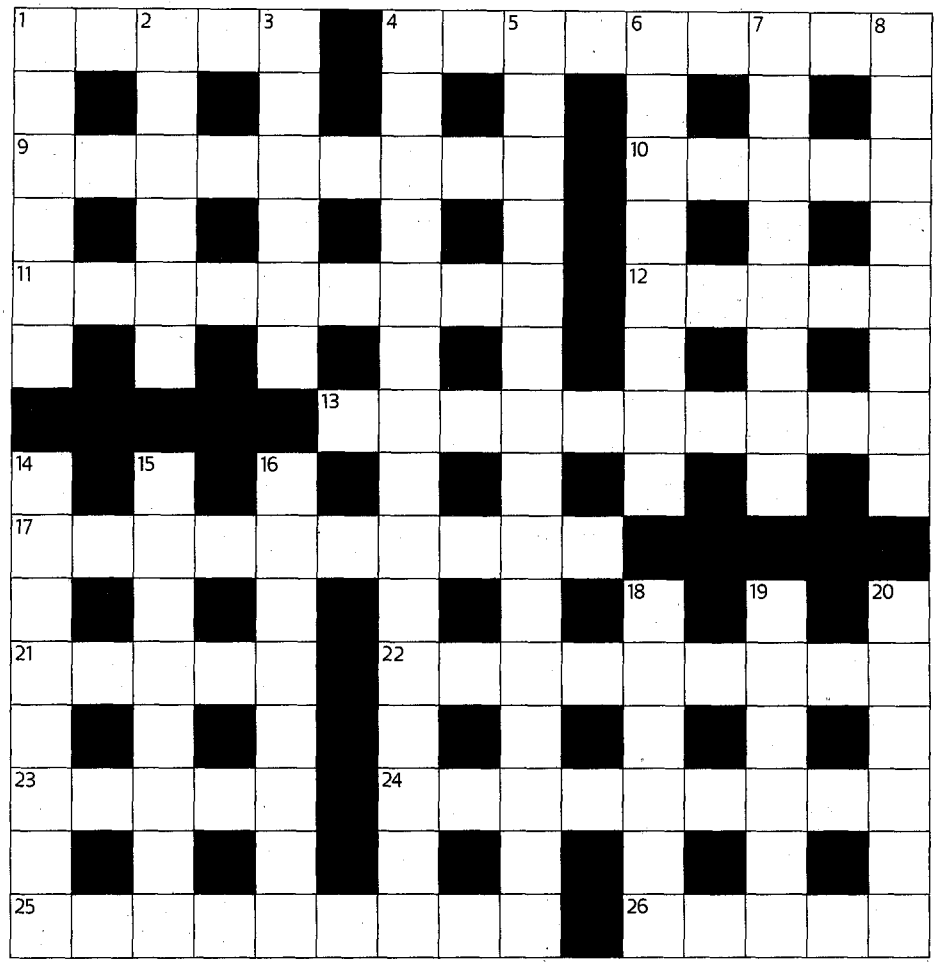
PUZZLE NO. 2977

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and **4** What is the answer? (It might be a problem!) (5,3,6)

9 Where the law is hoping to catch you in deep parts perhaps. (5,4)

10 Even if not all A's in school, they are useful in Germany. (5)

11 The way things go on—and on—and on… (9)

12 Can the musician scrape along without it? No sir! It's wrong! (5)

13 The top echelon of society gets browned! (5,5)

17 Fan dance in aid of a coin proves false. (10)

21 See 3 down

22 The team to get illegally a bad mark in a brush with Ford, perhaps. (9)

23 In another place, as an excuse. (I bail badly!) (5)

24 Not the hidden people who cause sound consequences in the upper range. (9)

25 Between courses these might be seen among French-American baseball players. (9)

26 For some reason, it describes a battle in the ring, which has nothing to do with King's business. (5)

DOWN

1 Some question implied as to whether Mr. Kennedy existed just to get used to excess. (6)

2 Makes some change when the morning is up. (6)

3 and **21** across That's what happens with those who pass too fast, but it describes what may be called for in a tie. (6,5)

4 What one does, sniffing at the disagreeable. (5,2,4,4)

5 The top isn't filled with this, which shows stupidity! (5-10)

6 Weapons-people, collectively—they are the type who start this! (4,4)

7 What one sometimes does to avoid an accident, as it happens. (5,3)

8 Sort of tear around when a prominent feature comes up to reinforce oscillations. (8)

14 It's difficult to have a conflict with the East, not being the sort that fits into your computer. (8)

15 One should have got rid of the first mate in order to steer a proper course, but didn't! (8)

16 An orgy of drunkenness, said to be a moment of immediate expectancy. (4,4)

18 One associated with love and war finds his sort with what is on the way, perhaps. (6)

19 What one might have termed the French marshal when he was young, considering temperament and constitution. (6)

20 It reportedly made a popping noise, when the eel was slithering. (6)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2976

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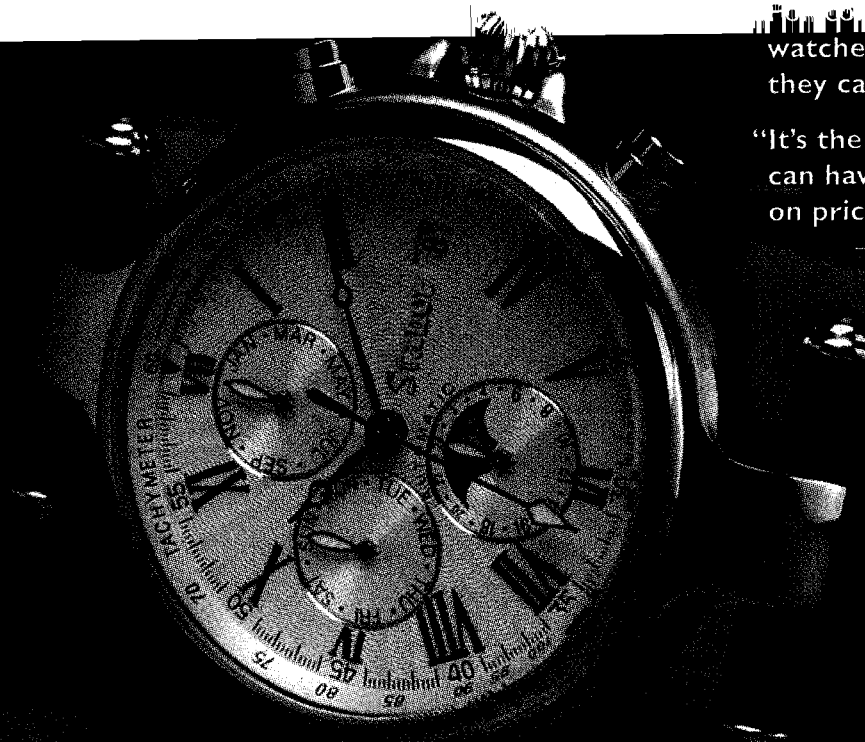

"Fine watches are tiny pieces of art they can wear."

"It's the 'complications' that can have the biggest impact on price."

—Business Week, July 2003

Stock Market Crash Creates Finest Watch Offering Ever!

Eighty two years ago, a small watchmaker in Europe created a legendary watch. He invented the first watch with an automatic mechanical movement. These innovative movements required no batteries and never needed to be manually wound. Only seven of these ultra-rare watches were ever made and we've only actually seen one surviving masterpiece in a watch history book. We were fascinated with the complex functions of this historical timepiece.

Production of this design did not survive the crash of 1929. Watch production plunged as did the economy. We found that these rare mechanical marvels are now highly prized by today's collectors. One leading auction house recently sold an exquisite 1929 mechanical Chronograph for $1,487,000. Inspired by that brilliant design, our Stauer *Meisterzeit* has been painstakingly handcrafted to the demanding standards of vintage watch collectors.

It's "Complicated".

Every interior dial has been carefully engineered to replicate the "complications" of the earliest chronographs. Two interior dials display day and month. A rare third dial depicts the sun and the stars on a 24-hour clock. The 27-jewel mechanical movement utilizes an automatic self-winding mechanism inspired by a patent from 1923. Thus this watch never needs batteries and never needs to be manually wound. It's powered by the movement of the body.

Now you can own a masterpiece...How is that possible?

We revere what has come before. Classic cars, fine antiques, paintings of the old masters—but we absolutely hate to pay retail. Stauer doesn't waste your money on Polo match sponsorships or high-priced celebrity endorsements. And since Stauer is selling this vintage chronograph directly to you, there are no Park Avenue jewelry store rents. We know that you are a smart collector, smart enough to want the best and still keep most of your money in your wallet and not on your wrist. This limited edition Stauer *Meisterzeit* allows you to wear a watch far more exclusive than most new "upscale" models.

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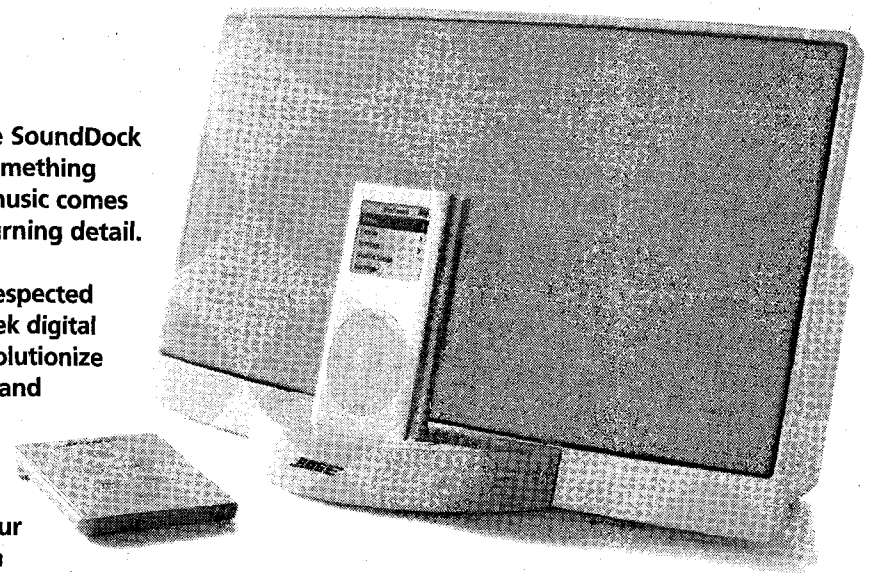
Insert iPod.® Hear what happens.

Introducing the new Bose® SoundDock™ digital music system.

Slip your iPod into the Bose SoundDock digital music system and something wonderful happens. Your music comes pouring out in rich, head-turning detail.

New from Bose, the most respected name in sound, this slim, sleek digital music system is ready to revolutionize the way you use your iPod and *iPod mini.



Bose SoundDock digital music system (shown with iPod mini)

Hearing is believing.

It may look small. But to your ears, the SoundDock system is anything but. It's packed inside with a proprietary Bose acoustic design that allows it to produce a roomful of rich, natural sound. *Ric Manning of the Gizmo Page says, "The Bose SoundDock turns an* iPod into a room-filling stereo." And *CNET* calls it the "best-sounding iPod speaker accessory we've tested." Impressed? Just wait until you experience our SoundDock system for yourself.

Get more out of your iPod.

Once you get all your favorite music into your iPod, the SoundDock system gives you another way to get it out. Just plug it in, slip your iPod into the docking cradle and you're ready to share and enjoy your music in almost any room in your home. Kitchen. Bedroom. Wherever. A small remote lets you operate it – as well as basic iPod functions – from across the room. And the SoundDock system charges your iPod while you listen. So when you're ready to hit the road, you can just pick up your iPod and go.

FREE Shipping with your order.

Listen. You need to hear the SoundDock system for yourself.

We'll give you – and your friends – 30 risk-free days to experience the SoundDock digital music system in your own home. Listen. Enjoy. And get permanently attached.

TO ORDER OR LEARN MORE, CALL TODAY

1-800-905-1436

EXT. RD110

Or visit

sounddock.bose.com

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